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A
Prefatory Discourse
TO AN
EXAMINATION
OF
A late BOOK, Entituled
AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of *England*,
BY
Gilbert, Bishop of Sarum.

WITH

An Examination of some Passages in the Preface to
the Exposition by way of Appendix to the Fore-
going Discourse.

By a Presbyter of the Church of *England*.

LONDON, Printed for Robert Clavell at the
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PAGE 22. line 19. *other hand*, read *one hand* : and so again, p. 28. l. 33. p. 40. l. 34. Or, read *Our*. p. 42. l. 17. read *critical*. p. 63. l. 1. *dele* 3. p. 74. l. 13. *Historion's*, read *Historian's*. p. 75. l. 32. p. 56. read p. 5, 6. p. 61. l. 6. *regulary*, r. *regularly*, p. 86. l. 4. *Books*, r. *Book*. p. 90. l. 21. *thirry*, r. *thirty*.

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Thirty Nine Articles, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

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1. 6.
THERE hath not perhaps been any thing of late Years publish'd in Divinity, that hath longer continu'd to be the Common Topick of Discourse, or hath given greater Offence to the Generality of the Clergy, than a late Book, Entituled *An Exposition of the 39 Articles of the Church of England*, by Gilbert Bishop of Sarum.

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There was indeed a Pamphlet in King Charles the Second's Reign, called *Naked Truth*, that made a great deal of Noise for a while, because it was suppos'd to be written by a Bishop, with whose Station and Character the Scope
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and Design of it did very ill agree ; which was to undermine the Church, throw down its Walls, and lay all open. What was principally aim'd at, and zealously contended for, was, Liberty of Thought and Opinion, scarce allowing it to be fit to tie Men up to any sort of Doctrine by Creeds or Subscriptions ; much less to confine Men to any particular Constitution, be it that of *Episcopacy*, or any other whatsoever.

Though this was very visible, upon a View taken of the Whole, yet were the several Parts of it so drawn up, and put together, that a great deal of it could not but be allow'd to be true, and Orthodox, so as to be very well lik'd by the unwary Reader : Nor was it easie for those that read it with Care, presently to point out by way of *Specialties*, very many down-right false Assertions, or Expressions ; which, when taken by themselves, could be either charged with Heresie, or be said to be in any Respect, notoriously obnoxious ; and yet the Alarm it gave, and the many Answers it receiv'd, plainly shew'd of how great Concern it was thought to be to the Establish'd Church, that the World should be acquainted with the dangerous Consequences of a Design so deeply, and artificially laid.

Whatever Prospect the Author of that Book might have at the time he publish'd it, the Opposition, which the Project of a *Comprehension* scored out in it, met with at that time, quash'd all Hopes of it during that Reign.

But, upon the late Revolution, some People imagining that mighty Alterations in the Church were intended to be made in Convocation *Anno* 1689, it was re-printed, and some other Pamphlets publish'd, to the same Effect: After which, all ending at that time, in a Toleration (as what the Generality of Dissenters seem'd well satisfy'd with) Things once more, as to Religion, are known to have continu'd quiet several Years, and might, in all likelihood, still have so done, had there not been too great an Occasion given for fresh Alarms and Jealousies, by a
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Revival of the Old Exploded Project, and a New Contrivance set on foot, to bring it to pass, under the specious Pretence of doing the Church of *England* an extraordinary piece of Service; and this by one, who in reason, should have been the last thought of for such an Undertaking; it being a thing particularly new, and fit to be observ'd, that a Person of Learning, and one that is suppos'd to understand the World very well, shall have happen'd to make so odd a Turn in it, so much out of the common Road of other People, as to have oppos'd in one Reign (as he did in a Reply to *Naked Truth*) what he seconds and promotes in another: Nay, what is more, when he neither was a Bishop, nor indeed was so much as thought to be one of us, or little more than as a Stander by, or a Neuter, he wrote for *Episcopacy*: And now, that he hath taken the Order upon him, and is plac'd in one of the most Eminent Stations of the Hierarchy, he is found to carry it with Coolness and Indifference to his own Order, and with an even Hand, at least, to different Constitutions, and Parties: Though this be a thing altogether unaccountable, yet this is the Case of my Lord Bishop of *Sarum*, in expounding the Articles of the Church of *England* in such manner as he hath done. His Lordship has been pleas'd to draw such a Scheme for Latitude in Opinion (even in things determin'd by the Articles) and hath given an Account so particularly New, not only of the Articles themselves, but of the nature of Subscribing to them, as if suffer'd to pass without being gainsaid, or refuted, might be apt in a while to render the Obligation to subscribe them, altogether insignificant, so as to be no sort of Barrier against any Adversary whatsoever; which consequently would more effectually open a way to *Comprehension* than any thing that hath yet been thought of.

Such a Design as this, to be usher'd into the World with so much Pomp and Noise, not only the Name of a very great Prelate, set in the Front of it, and an Epistle Dedicatory to the King, but in the Preface, said to be the Product of many Years Study, and to have had the Benefit

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of Corrections and Amendments, and the Approbation at last of Archbishops and Bishops, and many Learn'd Divines. This were almost enough to make a Man distrust his own Senses, considering the great Deference the English Clergy are upon all Occasions known to pay their *Metropolitans* and Bishops. Such a new Scene of Things were enough to startle many of them, and make them turn over all their past Studies, and look back to see whether they have not hitherto been mistaken in their first Principles, as well in Divinity as in Morality; that is, as well with respect to the common-receiv'd Sense of the Articles, as the known Duty of a Subscriber as to his dealing sincerely with his Superiours, who impose the Subscription in subscribing according to the Natural and Usual Import of the Words, without any such far-fetch'd Equivocations, or mental Reservations, as may soon render all Subscriptions, Declarations, and Oaths, of so little Use, as to be no sort of Security to those that impose them.

When a Great and Learned Prelate shall avowedly have publish'd a Reverse to the usual Notion we have of subscribing *ex animo*, and at the same time put new Constructions upon several of our Articles, tho' the Generality of the Clergy might through Modesty, be silent for a while, and out of a profound Respect to the Station and Character of the Author, content themselves with declaring to one another their Dislike of so ill a design'd Book, yet at the same time it could not but make them be the more sensible of the Want of Frequent Convocations, wherein they may with the more Decency upon all such Occasions, utter their Resentment in a Regular Way, whenever they apprehend the Church to have Wrong done her, by any Innovations, or Projects of the like kind. And hence it is, and not out of any private Animosities or Designs, that some have so earnestly contended for the Rights of the *Lower House of Convocation*, to the end that they may not come to be interrupted in their Examination of any thing within their Sphere, wherein the Welfare of the Church is concern'd: And those who have consider'd this mat-

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ter very well, cannot but think that such an Exposition of the Articles set forth with so great a Shew of publick Approbation and Authority, is of as great Concern to the Church, as almost any thing that has been published since the Articles were fram'd: forasmuch as perhaps the very Orthodoxy of a Religion does not more depend upon the Words themselves, wherein an Opinion or Belief is declared, than it does upon the Sense those Words are made to bear, if any such Sense be declared in such manner as to seem to be Authentick; and if the Sense deliver'd varies from the known Doctrine and Practice of the Church, it is in effect to frame new Articles of Religion, and bids fair for putting the Reformation upon a new foot, or at least does change the Boundaries, and alters the Terms of Communion.

No sooner therefore were the Clergy of the Lower House of Convocation in any sort of Condition to take this Matter into Consideration, but a very great Majority were found to concur in the Opinion, that they ought not to let slip that their first Opportunity of expressing their Zeal for the Establish'd Religion, and for the keeping things upon their Ancient Foundation: And though the Character of the Author of this Book, and the Respect due to a Bishop, and a Member of the Upper House of Convocation of the same Province, might make them move the more warily, lest a seeming Precipitancy might look like trespassing upon the Rules of Decency and Good Manners, yet they could not but apprehend themselves to lye under an indispensable Obligation of doing their utmost to rescue the Articles from any false Glosses or Interpretations, that should at any time happen to be put upon them, inconsistent with, or in any degree repugnant to what appears to have been all along the Sense of the Church; it being well known, that the Articles were originally the proper Acts of Convocation, and consequently as they naturally fall within their Cognizance, and cannot be suppos'd to be subject to any private Interpretation, so it does belong to them in a
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more especial manner, to watch over them, and by their Care and Prudence to guard them from Violence: This was what mov'd them to take my Lord of Sarum's Exposition of the Articles into Consideration, and after mature Deliberation, and such Methods observ'd as are usual in Cases of Moment, whatever Difficulties some few might seem to labour under, upon the Account of the Author: And as they were Strangers both to the Book and to the Design of it, upon a Recital of several Passages, and the Book it self laid before the House, it was found to be the general Opinion, That an Humble Representation of this Matter ought to be laid before the Most Reverend his Grace the Lord Archbishop, and the Right Reverend his Comprovincials; which as we find in the Narrative of the Proceedings of the Lower House, p. 58. was done with all the Expressions of Respect and Duty imaginable, *humbly praying their Lordships Opinion therein*: What they chiefly complain'd of, being first for Brevity's sake, reduc'd to the Three following Heads; and which were laid before his Grace and their Lordships accordingly.

- I. *That the said Book tends to introduce such a Latitude and Diversity of Opinions as the Articles were fram'd to avoid.*
- II. *That there are many Passages in the Exposition, which appear to them to be contrary to the true Meaning of them, and to other receiv'd Doctrines of our Church.*
- III. *That there are some things in the said Book, which seem to be of dangerous Consequence to the Church of England as by Law establish'd, and to derogate from the Honour of its Reformation.*

And now, that the World may not think that this Charge (if it may be so call'd without Offence) is groundless,

less, or that any part of it does want for Proof, but rather, that the Learned Author himself, may be more sensible than perhaps he is, how much his Book stands in need of Amendments: Those that were more immediately engag'd in drawing up the Complaint, have thought themselves oblig'd to give their Reasons for it, and endeavour to make it out to the satisfaction of others, to be just, hoping what they do herein, may at least have this Effect, that what his Lordship promises in his Preface, he will accordingly perform, *viz. That if in such Variety some important Matters are forgotten, and if others are mistaken, he will be so far from reckoning it an Injury to have those discover'd, that he will gladly receive any Advices of that kind; he will consider them carefully, and make the best use of them he can for the undeceiving of others, as soon as he is convinced that he has mis-led them.*

That this his Lordship is very capable of doing, no one doubts, he can set things in their true Light, and set them off to as good Advantage as any one whatsoever, if he is not unhappily in the wrong himself: And though, notwithstanding the *Christian Humility* and *Patience* he speaks of in his Preface (which are Qualities to be highly esteem'd in all, and in a most especial manner needful in a Bishop) it is possible, through the Frailty of Humane Nature, his Lordship may think it beneath him to have regard to the Judgment of any single or private Person whatsoever, yet it is to be hoped he will not take it ill, that such a Body of Men, in a thing which so properly lies before them, shall have taken upon them to offer their Opinion to the Archbishop and Bishops in Synod, in such manner as they did, as the most Regular and Decent Method they could think of in, so extraordinary a Case, and at the same time allow it to be but fit in their own Vindication, to give the World some Satisfaction upon what Grounds and Motives they have proceeded so far, and to shew, that so great a Complaint made against his Lordship's Exposition of the Articles, was not with-

The First Head of Complaint consider'd.

without just Cause; or otherwise, than as there lay a sort of Necessity upon them to do as they have done, lest the passing it over in silence, might by some be interpreted as a degree at least of Approbation and Assent.

To do this so fully as the Case would bear, and some perhaps may expect, so as to point out all the obnoxious Passages and Suggestions, to be met with up and down under every particular Article, would require a Volume equal in Bulk to the Exposition it self, and consequently, if called for, must be a Work of time. But from this cursory View taken of the Whole in the following Sheets, with a particular Regard had to the general Design of it, in the way of Introduction only to a more particular Examination of it, if need be, any common Reader will see enough to justify the Conduct of the Clergy in Convocation herein.

What is for the present chiefly propos'd, is to keep within the compass of the three Heads of Complaint, the first whereof is against the general Design of the Book as it *tends to introduce such a Latitude and Diversity of Opinions as the Articles themselves were fram'd to avoid.*

To make this the more obvious, it will be needful first to consider the Design of the Church in framing the Articles, what Benefit was propos'd, or what Inconvenience was intended to be avoided thereby; and then, Secondly, the Scope and Design of the Exposition must be so far look'd into as to discover what it chiefly points at, what sort of Latitude is labour'd therein; and whether it be not such as is inconsistent with the Design of the Church in framing the Articles.

First, As to the Design of the Church in framing the Articles, though it is not to be doubted but that they were fram'd for several good Ends and purposes, yet the only thing mention'd in the Title of them, as the thing chiefly aim'd at, is *to avoid Diversities of Opinions, and to establish Consent touching True Religion.* It was not, it seems, so much for the Satisfaction of other Reformed Churches abroad that

that the Articles were made as for the Benefit of Unity and Peace at home. True it is, that some of the Reformed Churches abroad, upon their first settling and modelling themselves, and in opposition to the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, did judge it proper to make their particular Confessions; as that of *Ausburg* first, and then *Basil*, and *Saxony*, &c. in which they follow'd the Example of the Primitive Catholick Bishops, who at their first Elevation to their Episcopal Thrones, gave as well in behalf of themselves, as of those committed to their Care, a Summary of the Religion they profess'd, the better to maintain Communion and Fellowship with all neighbouring Bishops and Churches. And tho' something of this kind might be intended by those that compil'd our Articles, and someregard in the framing them might be had to other Reformed Churches, whom they desir'd to hold a good Correspondence with; yet, as it is not to be imagin'd, that they should have their Eye more upon others than upon themselves (as my Lord of *Sarum* is pleas'd to suppose them sometimes to have had) so neither is there so much as any notice taken in the *Title* of any thing of this kind, but all is level'd at the Unanimity and Peace to be secur'd in the first place at home, that all who are Members of this particular Church, may be sure to be of one Mind, so far as concerns not only Fundamentals, and the known Articles of Faith, but even in all necessary Doctrines, with respect to the Discipline and good Government of the Society, to the which they belong; the Head and Founder whereof is known to be a God of Order; *not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace.*

Now, as the most effectual Way of compassing this so much wish'd for General Agreement in Principles, as well as Uniformity in Worship in a Church, is to take care that those whose Business it is to instruct others, shall be sure to be first very well agreed among themselves; so due care accordingly is taken, & Provision made, that all such especially as look towards the Ministry, shall be

trained up in the same Notions of things, and generally speaking, in the same Schools and Universities; and before they are admitted into Holy Orders, they are not only under their Hands to declare to the World, as well as to the Bishop that admits them, that this is their Sense of things, and what they do from their Hearts very willingly subscribe to; but least they should mis-lead others hereafter, by not rightly understanding what they set their Hands to, they are to be examin'd in those very Articles of Religion, to the which they subscribe; and they must be able to shew how well they understand them, by proving them from Scripture (as they are all of them very capable of being proved.) After all which, if Men will be sincere, and design to be honest and true to that Promise which is imply'd in subscribing, *viz.* to adhere to the Doctrine contain'd in those Articles, a more effectual Course than this cannot be thought of by a Church, whereby to *avoid Diversities of Opinions, and to stablish Consent touching true Religion.* If Men will in any reasonable degree of Christian Submission hearken to their Teachers, and those Teachers keep to what they have under their Hands declared to be their Opinion and Belief in all Points of Moment fit to be taught; there can be little or no room left for any material Disagreement in the Doctrine of so well a govern'd and establish'd Church.

Thus the Laity as well as the Clergy, are in some measure taken care of by the Church in framing the Articles, and a due Regard had to the avoiding *Diversity of Opinions* in all her Children in general: But as to the Clergy, and such as are by Law requir'd to subscribe the Articles, such particular Care is taken as to them, as one would not think it possible that the Obligation they lie under to be of one mind as to whatever is determin'd in the Articles should ever come to be disputed.

True it is, that upon some extraordinary Occasions the Security requir'd by the Civil Power, by Declarations, Engagements and Oaths, hath sometimes upon Principles of State-

The First Head of Complaint consider'd.

State-Policy, been such as to imply a Latitude intended by the Imposers, the better to please and take in Men of different Parties and Perswasions: But, as this is less proper to be done in Matters of Religion, so it is undoubtedly a great Mistake to imagine that our Church intended any such thing as a double Meaning in framing the Articles. Had they been fram'd with a Design to take in Variety of Sects, and Men of different Parties, to make the better Shew and swell up our Communion to so much the greater Number, they might indeed properly enough have been term'd Articles of Union and Comprehension; but the Title they now bear, must have been left out, which plainly contradicts all Designs of that kind, unless to *avoid diversity of Opinions* be the same as to encourage them, and the way to *stablish Consent touching true Religion*, is to allow Men to dissent from one another as much as ever, and continue to be of different Minds as to the very things wherein it is propos'd they should agree. If we do but read the Title of the Articles, this matter cannot but be very plain, the Words are these:

Articles whereupon it was agreed by the Archbishop and Bishops, — and the whole Clergy, &c. for the avoiding of the Diversities of Opinions, and for the stablishing of Consent touching True Religion, &c.

The Design of the Church is expressly declar'd to be, that such as subscribe to the Articles, should agree in the things therein contain'd. It must be confess'd that there may happen to be some Obscurity or Ambiguity in the most exact and best compos'd Declarations of Doctrines and Opinions; and every Subscriber may not have the same Insight into the true Meaning and full Import of every Expression; and so far some Scope there may seem to be for some little varying from one another: But the Design of the Church being declar'd to have been *to avoid diversity of Opinions*, it could not but be the Design of the Compilers as much as in them lay, to avoid all such Obscurity and Ambiguity; so that if any Scope be left *for diversity of*

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Opinion, it is but by Accident : Some for want of due Knowledge may happen to have different Sentiments of the Things that are stated in the Articles, but it cannot have been the Design of the Church that it should be so, but the contrary.

And if ever it be possible to avoid Obscurity and Ambiguity, there was as much care taken in the Case before us as can well be desired ; for though no single Person can be so secure of his Stile, or pretend to be so great a Master of Expression as to be sure to render himself intelligible to all alike, or make his Words carry the same Sense to all that read them, yet when so many of known Abilities (all of them supposed to be Men of Integrity and Masters of Language) shall make it their Business to draw up the Substance of the Doctrine of the Church to the which they belong, and reduce it to Articles which are to be by way of Test upon Men, whereby to know whether they are of the same Communion or not ; It is not easie to suppose they could so far fall short of their Design, as to leave Men as much at liberty as before, and what they have fram'd fall so short of its design as to take little or no hold of the Subscriber.

This is so far from having been the Case, that to the Honour of the Compilers of our Articles, it must be acknowledg'd, that for the sevenscore Years last past, since the Publication of them, they have prevented *Diversity of Opinion* in the Church to that degree, that little or no Dispute hath hitherto been about the different Senses the Words may in common and unforc'd Construction be made to bear. All have look'd upon the Articles as a sort of Text or Standard of Doctrine, from which such as have subscribed, have not hitherto thought themselves at liberty to depart : Some Learning may have been employ'd about the meaning of Christ's Descent into Hell, but it is the Clause in the Creed, and not the Article, hath been the Subject-matter of it ; as we take it for granted that the one means the same as the other, and neither more nor less. Some other Instances there may be of the like kind, and yet it cannot be said that this is owing to Mens taking upon

upon them to put different Senses upon the Articles; but there being some disputable Points not determin'd in the Articles wherein Men happen to differ, some, the better to give countenance to their private Opinions, will needs draw the Articles to their side, and endeavour to fix things upon the Articles which in truth do not belong to them, as will be shewn more at large by and by.

In the mean time there is this to be said, that over and above the great Care taken in wording the Articles, so as to avoid, as much as is possible, all Obscurity or Ambiguity of Expression; that which still confines Men so much more to the true Sense of the Church, and excludes all pretences to such Latitude, as cannot but end in Diversity of Opinions instead of avoiding it, is the having many Helps whereby to understand the Articles as we ought, without presuming to put our own Sense upon them, and make them speak what Language we please. The Articles no doubt, as well as other Compositions, notwithstanding all the care that hath been taken about them, might be liable to many different Interpretations, since even the Scriptures themselves are so: But that which makes it not very easie for a diligent Enquirer to be at any great loss as to the true Sense of our Articles, is our having so many standing Expositors and Interpreters of them provided by the Church it self; all which do speak its Sense, and are of the same Authority as the very Articles themselves. If any thing in the Articles may seem to carry a double Meaning, or may be said to be obscure, we have the Homilies, the Liturgy, the Rubrick, the Canons; we have the uninterrupted Practice of the Church, and the Writings of the many Learned Divines our Church hath been bless'd with for Seventy Years and upwards, by way of sure Conveyance of what may be called Tradition: All these Helps we have whereby to be ascertain'd of the true Import of the Articles, insomuch as to make it hard for any one to plead Ignorance in any thing material; so effectually hath the Church provided against *Diversity of Opinions* in those who are admitted to the Ministry, and are qualify'd thereto, by subscribing to the Articles; there being,

ing nothing more plain, than that the Design of the Church in framing the Articles, and suiting them to her known establish'd Doctrines, was, that all her Children should agree in such necessary Points of Religion as she hath thought fit to put together for the more easie Information and Instruction of all such as pretend to be of her Communion: And whoever goes about to frustrate the Design of the Church herein by encouraging Men to subscribe to these Articles, and yet continue to be of different Opinions in the very Points therein determin'd, and sufficiently made known to be the meaning of the Church, cannot but be truly said to endeavour *to introduce a Latitude of Opinion which the Articles were fram'd to avoid*: And whether my Lord of Sarum's Exposition of the Articles doth tend this way, is the next thing to be consider'd.

Were any one to sit down and consider with himself, and study which way he might most effectually disappoint the Church, and frustrate its Design of avoiding *Diversities of Opinions* in some material Points in Religion, could any thing be thought of more effectual in such a Case, than to find out a Way of encouraging such a Latitude of Conscience as well as of Opinion; as notwithstanding Mens subscribing so many Articles, still to be of as many Minds, and as different from one another as ever, and consequently not by their Judgment be restrain'd from instilling into others such Notions as are directly opposite to the common receiv'd Doctrines of the Church; and even in things of so great moment as not to be left undetermin'd by the Church, but such as are stated and settled in the Articles to the which they have subscrib'd?

A Project of this nature might well enough have become some complaining Dissenter: It might be natural enough for such as suffer by their not subscribing to the Articles, to express their Resentment, that so many able Preachers (as Mr. Baxter us'd to express it) should by this means be excluded the Service of the Church, and then labour some such way for the bringing them in: But this is what does not become a Bishop, whose Business it is upon many

Occasions to exact the Subscription of others, as being entrusted with the Care of it by the Church.

And, yet so it is, that a very great Bishop instead of seconding the Design of the Church in compiling the Articles, thinks fit to expound them in such a manner, and introduces his Exposition with such a sort of Preface and Preliminaries, as to make it very practicable and natural for Men of different Opinions, as to the very things determin'd in the Articles to make no difficulty of Subscribing: Whatever the Church may have declar'd to be her Meaning be it never so obvious any other way, if it happens not to be so fully express'd in the Words of the Article but that they may be made to bear a double grammatical Sense, whatever may have been done in the way of Explanation any other way, though never so authentically it matters not, my Lord of *Sarum* hath enter'd no Proviso of any sort in laying down his Scheme for Latitude; but if the Words of the Article will bear it, or if a Man be but Grammarian good enough, as in his own Opinion, to make them bear it, he may subscribe in his own Sense, and be an honest Man, and a good Churchman, and all shake hands and be Friends.

That this is not to carry the Matter further than his Lordship designs it, will appear from a due and faithful recourse had to his own Words, in Page 8. of the *INTRODUCTION*, where the Scene is laid for Latitude; and we are there in plain Terms told how far his Lordship would have it be made to reach. The Words are these. — *an Article being conceiv'd in such general Words that it can admit of different literal and grammatical Senses, even when the Senses given are plainly contrary one to another, both sides may subscribe the Article with a good Conscience and without any Equivocation.* To make this the more sensible, I shall give an Instance of it in an Article, concerning which there is no Dispute at present. The Third Article concerning Christ's Descent into Hell, is capable of three different Senses, and all the three are both literal and grammatical. The first is, that Christ descended locally into Hell and preach'd to the Spirits there in prison.

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The First Head of Complaint consider'd.

—— A second Sense of which this Article is capable, is that by *Hell* is meant the Grave, according to the Signification of the Original Word in the Hebrew ——— A third Sense is, that by *Hell*, according to the Signification of the Greek Word, is to be meant the Place or Region of Spirits separated from their Bodies, &c. All these three Senses differ very much from one another, and yet they are all Senses that are literal and grammatical; so that in which of these soever a Man conceives the Article he may subscribe it, and he does no ways prevaricate in so doing: If Men would therefore understand all the other Articles in the same largeness and with the same Equity, there would not be that Occasion given for unjust Censure that there hath been.

The Words of the Article which my Lord of Sarum says may be subscrib'd in any of the three foregoing Senses and not prevaricate, are these. **As Christ dy'd for us and was buried, so also it is to be believed that he went down into Hell.**

This is the whole third Article; the Words indeed are few, but yet one would think they are sufficient to exclude one of my Lord of Sarum's Grammatical Senses at least, so as by *Hell* not to mean being buried, when it is so plainly said, that **as Christ dy'd and was buried** (which is the same as being laid into a Grave) **so also it is to be believed that he went down into Hell.** The Bishop's second Grammatical Sense makes Christ's Descent into Hell and being buried to be the same, but this cannot be unless we will suppose that the Meaning of the Church may be, that as *Christ dyed and was buried*, so also it is to be believ'd that he was buried again; and yet according to this Grammatical Sense of the Words, upon the Account of *Hell* sometimes signifying no more than the Grave, my Lord of Sarum is of Opinion, that if a Man subscribes the Article, and means no more by it than so, it is what he may justify; he does no way prevaricate in so doing, are his Lordships Words.

Such a Liberty as this, which in effect is to make the Article either speak Nonsense, or signify just nothing at all,

all, is the Measure of Latitude my Lord of *Sarum* proposes to be us'd in subscribing to all the rest of the Articles; and could he perswade others to be of his mind herein, it is hard to suppose an Article to be so very express, as not to be capable of being perverted and made to signifie somewhat or other, which is very wide of the true Sense of the Church; and leave room enough for every one to enjoy their own Opinions as much as ever, notwithstanding their Subscribing to the Articles. If we are neither bound to consider what the Church in all likelihood intended, nor look any further than to subscribe in such a Sense, as according to true Grammar, the Words will bear; no one need desire greater Scope than this, whereby to evade the Force of Subscriptions, Declarations, and Engagements: No sort of Security can be had by these usual means of knowing Mens Minds: Nothing shall hold a Man that can come up to these Measures: And yet this is what my Lord of *Sarum* very plainly makes to be the Standard of his Latitude, with respect to all the Articles. His Words are these: *If Men would understand all the other Articles in the same Largeness, and with the same Equity, there would not be that Occasion given for unjust Censure that there has been.*

What his Lordship means by *Unjust Censure*, which he is so desirous to avoid, is not easie to say, unless he refers to an Objection he has thought fit to start in the Beginning of the Introduction, against such a Number of Articles as we are there said to have. *It may seem somewhat strange to see such a Collection of Tenets made the Standard of the Doctrine of a Church that is deservedly valu'd for her Moderation, &c.* This Difficulty my Lord of *Sarum* takes effectual care to remove, by so ordering the matter that our having such a Collection of Tenets to be subscrib'd to, shall be only reckon'd as a thing of course; and Men may be of as many different Opinions as ever, notwithstanding such their Subscription.

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That this is no forc'd Consequence at all, but the natural Result of my Lord of *Sarum's Largeness and Equity*, will soon appear, if we do but descend to some Particulars: Nor need we to look out any further than as my Lord of *Sarum* himself will be found to make use of his own Scheme in expounding several of the Articles: though one would think the Church did propose some sort of Advantage by framing the Articles, and did intend to shut out some sort of People from the Ministry by so strictly requiring them to be so often subscrib'd by way of Barrier against ill princip'd Men; yet were my Lord of *Sarum* to preside in a Court of *Equity* upon this occasion, the following Instances will shew how easie it would be for Variety of Sectaries, and Men of unorthodox Principles, to qualifie themselves for the Ministry by subscribing our Articles.

The very use my Lord of *Sarum* makes of his own Rule, will sufficiently lay open the Absurdity of it (pardon the Expression, the Inconvenience it may at least be call'd) that must needs attend so great a Liberty. As now for instance.

How far a Man may think himself at liberty to question the Authority of good part of the Canonical Scripture, notwithstanding his having subscrib'd the 6th Article, may be fit to be consider'd. In which Article there is this Clause: *In the Name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose Authority was never any Doubt in the Church.* These Words, if we look no further, and take this part of the Article by it self, without connecting it to what follows, will very easily bear such a Grammatical Sense, as to exclude several of the Epistles from being Scripture; and at the same time will very fully justify what his Lordship hath been often blam'd for, in calling into question, and in effect rejecting the Authenticalness of a Text in *S. John's* first Epistle, c. 5.7. which the Socinians and Unitarians would very gladly get rid of, viz. *There are Three that bear record in Heaven, &c.* It must be confess'd, that
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this Text has been controverted ; there hath been *Doubt* made of it in the Church ; my Lord of *Sarum* who is a Bishop of the Church, has *doubted* of it before now, and hath signify'd as much in Print, so as to seem to bring it within the Words of the Article : But as the Use made of it in our Liturgy shews that the Church it self does not question the Canonicalness of it (whatever here and there one, in his own private Judgment may think himself at liberty to do,) so is there in the same 6th Article enough said to rescue it, and all those Epistles, from being excluded the Authority and Denomination of Scripture, which may for a while have been question'd by some. That which sufficiently explains the Rule laid down, as to what is to be esteem'd Canonical Scripture, is this, that the very Books of the Old Testament receiv'd by our Church are named, and then follows this general Clause : *All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly receiv'd, we do receive and account them Canonical.* Thus, whoever has a Bible to look into, will according to this Article, know whether the Text my Lord of *Sarum* hath so * mean an Opinion of, ought to be receiv'd as Scripture * *Vid. Expos.* or not. If thus one part of an Article may be allow'd to *p. 40.* explain another, my Lord of *Sarum's* Liberty is not more to be defended in questioning the Validity of the Text, than in putting a wrong Construction upon the Word *Hell* in the Third Article : the Advantage he takes of the known Ambiguity of the Word *Hell*, as he finds it at the End of the Article, will not justify his not looking back to the connecting Term of *so also*, which plainly points out something more to be believ'd, than that Christ was dead and buried, or laid into a Grave.

The 8th Article obliges us to believe the Three Creeds made use of in our Church. The Words are these ; **The three Creeds, Nice Creed, Athanasius Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed ; for they may be prov'd by most certain Warrants of holy Scripture.** Such as have a good hand at putting far-fetch'd Constructions, and Grammatical Senses

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upon Words, will tell you, that the Foundation of our believing and receiving these Creeds being but upon the Supposition of their being warranted by Holy Scripture; and that being given as the Reason of it, a Man may himself best judge whether they are so to be prov'd from Scripture or not, and believe them accordingly; it being a known Rule, that a Church as well as a private Person, may happen to mistake in matter of fact; and so far as any thing that is enacted is built upon a wrong Supposition, so far at least in *Equity* it falls short of being obligatory.

That this may not be thought to be an overstraining the use that may be made of my Lord of *Sarum's* Latitude, nothing less than this can excuse his Way of managing the Article before us: The Article may call this *Nice Creed*, and the other *Athanasius Creed*, if the Church thinks fit; but instead of giving any Reason why they may well enough be so called, his Lordship makes it his Business to prove both the one and the other to be of much later date, and consequently that the Church was mistaken, and that they neither of them were what they are said to be. The next thing he does by way of Exposition, is to strip all the three Creeds of any Pretence they may be thought to have from Antiquity, or the Authority of Councils; that they may not be thought to have any thing that looks like Claim to any degree of Authority more than barely as they have Scripture on their side to support them, be it their having been received by the Catholick Church for so many Ages, or any thing else; all Pretences of this kind, his Lordship either endeavours to refute, or lessen, or make nothing of. His Opinion of the Apostle's Creed it self (though he owns it to be beyond dispute above Twelve Hundred Years old, and he might safely own a great deal more) his Remark upon it is this, *That it was so late, that neither this nor the other Creeds have any Authority upon their own account.* And again, *We receive those Creeds not for their own sakes, nor for the sake of those that prepared them, but for the sake of the Doctrine that is contained in them, because we believe that the Doctrine which they declare is contained in the Scriptures —*
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therefore we do receive them. That for this reason chiefly it is, that we receive them and believe them is true; but this ought not to be exclusive of all other Collateral Motives to Belief; forasmuch as it brings the Creeds upon the level with any good Book, which has good store of Proofs from Scripture to warrant the Substance of it; and where we apprehend that either the one or the other is wanting of such Proof, so far, according to my Lord of *Sarum*, our Obligation to believe either the one or the other, ceases notwithstanding our Subscription.

That a Scene is laid for such a Latitude in subscribing the next Ten Articles, as is inconsistent with the Design of the Church in framing them, is very plain; for that his Lordship takes occasion under them to state several Questions which have been started under the several Heads of *Original Sin, Free Will, Justification, Predestination, Election*, and the like, with so much profess'd Indifference, and leaves things in so equal a Poize in the way of different Grammatical Senses (fairly intimating that such Senses the Articles will bear) as sufficiently encourages a Liberty of Subscribing in any of those Senses; and yet some of those Opinions which his Lordship hath thought fit to set off to so good Advantage, and does not offer to disprove, amount to little less than Heresie, or at least may be reckon'd among those Errors the Articles were design'd to oppose. Others are directly contrary to what, not only from all our great Writers since the Reformation, by way of Tradition, but by several Collects in our Liturgy (which are the best Comments on our Articles, and the most authentick Expounders of our Doctrine) appears to be the receiv'd Doctrine of the Church of *England* as to those Points, and consequently the many Opinions laid down and left unrefuted, are plainly inconsistent with the Design of the Articles themselves. But to descend to particulars, in matters of so much Intricacy, would be to draw out this Discourse beyond its intended Length; and therefore, though there may be occasion to say something more of it before we have done, yet the Illustration of it will more naturally fall

fall under the particular Examination of the Articles themselves.

Proceed we therefore to the Articles of the *Church* and *Church-Government*, for the sake of which in all likelihood this whole Scheme for Latitude in Opinion was first fram'd.

The 19th Article, *viz.* OF THE CHURCH, may with some pains be made to bear very different Grammatical Senses, and consequently according to the Bishop's Latitude and way of Expounding, may in some very wrong Senses be subscrib'd to. The Words are these: *The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of Faithful Men in which the pure Word of God is preach'd, and the Sacraments be duly administred according to Christ's Ordinance in all those things that of Necessity are requisite to the same.* The Definition here given of the visible Church is very plainly restrain'd to a regular Administration of the Sacraments according to Christ's Ordinance; and so it is as to the preaching part also: But as on the other hand, our Church hath never understood it exclusively of Cases of Necessity (it being well known that God in such Cases accepts of the Will for the Deed) so neither on the other hand, unless there be a Necessity, is it by any far-fetch'd Grammatical Sense to be so expounded as to be next to nothing; and yet so it is, that when we come to look into the Exposition of this Article, we find my Lord Bishop of *Sarum* can by vertue of his Latitude (his *Largeness and Equity*) so contrive the matter, and evade the Force of the Article to that degree, that if Men are baptiz'd, it matters very little by whom it is done, if we do but take care to retain the Essentials of Water, and of baptizing in the Name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; though according to Christ's Ordinance, the power of doing it belongs to a distinct Order of Men; and our Rubrick before the Form of private Baptism, implies no less: And though the same is also true as to preaching, yet let a Number of Men for their Honesty have but a Right to be called *Faithful*, and a very little more

more shall make a *Visible Church* of them, according to my Lord of *Sarum's* Notion of a Church, or according to such a Notion as a Man may easily frame to himself of it, by the help of my Lord of *Sarum's* Scheme and Management: A Man that hath no better a Notion of a Church than this, may subscribe to this Article, and his Integrity not be question'd by my Lord of *Sarum* for his so doing; his Lordship not having been pleas'd to consider, that in this Article, without respect had to particular Cases of Necessity, which supercedes all Rule of course, a Definition is given of the *Visible Church of Christ* in general, wherein it is not to be suppos'd there should want either Preaching or Administring the Sacraments according to *Christ's Ordinance* in a regular Way; and to set this forth, and press the Necessity of it, where there is no Necessity to have it otherwise, ought to have been the Business of an Expositor, instead of labouring Ways and Means to evade the Force of the Article, as his Lordship hath thought fit to do.

Again, Article 20, of the *Authority of the Church*, according to the Bishop's *Largeness and Equity*, it is easie to suppose notwithstanding a Man's subscribing to this Article, that the Church hath really no power to enforce the Observation of Rites or Ceremonies; much less hath she any Authority to make Decisions in Matters of Faith: for though we are generally apt to imagine no less than all this from the Article, yet the Words will bear a Grammatical Sense amounting to nothing of all this, if to any sort of Power at all. The Words are these: *The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and Authority in matters of Faith.* These Words a great many have been so much offended at, as to have made a great deal of Bustle about them; and Archbishop *Laud* was accused of having put them into the Article, his Accusers pretending they were not in the Original. But had my Lord of *Sarum's* Notion of different Grammatical Senses, been thought of in those Days, there had been no need of any Dispute of this kind; for what signifie the Words at last? The *Church* may have power, to *decree Rites or Ceremonies*; but it does not say that any

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any are bound to observe them. *The Church* may have *Authority in matters of Faith*, true: For hath she not Authority to preach the Fundamentals of Christian Religion, and propagate the Gospel, and teach such things as are Matters of Faith? And what Dissenter is there that will deny the Church this Power? But this does no way come up to what the Article has all along been suppos'd to import. True it is, that the Bishop of *Sarum* hath not in express Terms just under this Article, made this use of his Rule for Latitude: But the Favour shewn to different Constitutions under other Articles is inconsistent with the Allowance of such a Power in the Church, as this Article is suppos'd to assert.

In the 21st Article concerning the Authority of General Councils, we have these Words: **Things ordained by them, as necessary to Salvation, have neither Strength nor Authority, unless it may be declared that they are taken out of Holy Scriptures.** That things ordain'd by a Council, should be *taken out of Holy Scriptures*, will bear such a Grammatical Sense as to affect our most authentick Creeds; for whatever Proof may be made of them by fair Deduction and Consequence, not one of them can be said *to be taken out of Holy Scripture*: There is no one of them to be found either in the Old or in the New Testament, *totidem Verbis*, or in the Form they now stand: And how far this Declaration of the Church in this Article may have help'd his Lordship in his paying so little respect to the Creeds, and bringing them so very low, and even upon the level with any Orthodox Book that he himself shall happen to write (as hath been already shewn) may be fit to be consider'd.

The next Article which offers it self upon this occasion, is the 23^d, of **MINISTRING IN THE CONGREGATION**. Perhaps there is not any one thing the Church of *England* hath taken more effectual care to secure by all the ways imaginable, than a regular Admission to the Ministry by Episcopal Ordination, as found to be most Ancient and Apostolick, if not of Divine Institution. This, in opposition to Presbytery, or

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any other way of Intrusion into the Church is effectually secured by the Laws of the Land, as well Civil as Ecclesiastical. Our Rubrick and Liturgy (both which are sufficiently plain and expresse) are confirm'd and establish'd by Act of Parliament. To this we may add, not only the Canons of the Catholick Church, but those of the Church of *England* agreed upon in Convocation, and by Royal Sanction made obligatory, as the Rule of that Canonical Obedience, which all Clergymen are bound to upon Oath. The Form of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordination of Ministers (as the only way whereby Men are to be call'd into the Vineyard in this Church) being annex'd to the Book of Common-prayer, and establish'd by the same Authority as the Book it self sufficiently sets forth the Distinction of the Three Orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and the Authority of each; and as much is there said as can be desired, or could well be thought of, whereby to shew the Necessity which the Church thinks fit to lay upon Episcopal Ordination, as the only regular way of being made a Minister of Christ. This Book of Consecration, &c. so very explanatory of the Doctrine of the Church as to this point, is requir'd to be subscrib'd under a distinct Article, viz. 36th. and yet after all this, though the Church has taken all this pains not to be misunderstood in so material a Point; yet by the Help of this Exposition, and that *Largeness and Equity* which it allows; a Presbyterian or Independant may subscribe and not be charg'd with Insincerity or Prevarication.

The Words of the Article are these: It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of publick Preaching or Ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same; and those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this Work by Men, who have publick Authority given unto them in the Congregation to call and send Ministers into the Lords Vineyard.

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Any one that lives in *England* and is but in any degree acquainted with our Constitution, so as to know who it is that is in Authority in the State, to appoint State-Officers; that it is the King, and Men in publick Offices act by his Commission and by his Authority; do also know, that the Persons who have publick Authority in *England* to call and send Ministers into the Lord's Vineyard, according to that Law which requires these Articles to be subscribed, are the Bishops only; and no one can imagine that the Article when fram'd, or when tender'd by the Bishop to be subscrib'd, should mean any thing else; yet after all, when we come to look into the Exposition of this Part of the Article Page 257, we are told another Story, viz. That *This is put in very general Words, far from that MAGISTERIAL STIFFNESS in which some have taken upon them to dictate in this matter. The Article does not resolve it self into any particular Constitution, but leaves the Matter open, and at large, for such Accidents as had happen'd, and such as might still happen; they who drew it, had the state of the several Churches before their Eyes, that had been differently reformed; and although their own had been less forced to go out of the beaten Path, than any other, yet they knew that all things among themselves had not gone according to those Rules that ought to be sacred in regular times. Necessity has no Law, and is a Law to it self.*

This last Suggestion, for the which there is so very little Grounds or Occasion, cannot easily be suppos'd to be otherwise design'd, than as thereby the better to bring our Church upon the level with some Churches abroad which are after *Calvin's* Model, which at the same time very much detracts from the Honour of our Reformation, as will be shewn in its due place. This Supposal or Suggestion of our having been defective in our way of reforming, as well as some others, is to make it look the more plausible, to urge Men to avoid that *Magisterial Stiffness* aforementioned; some pretending to dictate as if *Episcopacy* were the only regular Form of Church-Government, or proper way of
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sending Labourers into the Vineyard. These *dictating* People are in p. 259, call'd the *Hotter Spirits*, and such as the Expositor sufficiently intimates not to suit with his Humour, as not coming up to his Measures : He is not of their Class ; he hath not only different Notions of things himself, but he will have the Article it self, and consequently the Church, to intend *to leave the matter open and at large* ; as who knows what may happen in *England*, as well as what hath happen'd of late in a neighbouring Countrey ? — A pretty good Hint of a wary Man that looks forward to purpose.

In the mean time, till that Day comes so much wish'd for by some, as which cannot but of course bring along with it such a thorough Reformation as will soon root out Episcopacy, under the Notion of a Popish Ordinance, and be attended with several other Alterations in the establish'd Religion of the like kind. Thus much advantage such as are well-wishers thereto, may reasonably promise to themselves, from this Notable Discovery of a Latitude intended by the Church to Men of different Constitutions, that so far as my Lord of *Sarum's* Credit will go with the Presbyterian and Independant (and that it will go a great way with either of them, we may reasonably suppose) neither of them need make any difficulty of qualifying themselves for some good Cure or Dignity in the Church, by subscribing to this Article : For, as to their taking Episcopal Orders, whatever Notions some may heretofore have had of it, so long as a Man hath no Scruple upon him, as to the Validity of those Orders, which he hath already receiv'd, and the Article of the Church concerning *Ministring in the Congregation*, may be so understood, as not to make any other Ordination necessary, but what they have had already ; what hurt can there be in submitting to such further outward Formalities, with respect to Episcopacy, as the Laws of the Land, which are only humane, and no further obligatory, may require ?

When thus some of those worthy Men Mr. *Baxter* us'd to talk of, those Men of different Constitutions shall have qualified themselves for the Ministry, it hath been already shewn how they may easily get over the Article of *rites and CEREMONIES*, and all that tends to Decency and Order; and by these means in a while things may be brought to a very hopeful pass; insomuch as those of the Church of *England*, as now by Law established, may come to be content to leave their Parochial Meetings to these new Comers, and be glad any how to get together, and serve God in their own way, as they were fain to do within the Memory of Man upon the same Occasion.

Not to dwell longer on this Topick, but to shut it up with the same Article, as we may reasonably presume the Expositor had a particular regard to when he first cast his Scheme; forasmuch as what for the present seems to carry with it a Face of more than ordinary Christian Temper and Moderation, may come to do good Service to some People upon occasion. Whoever considers the use that may be made of *different Grammatical Senses* to be put upon Words, must needs be sensible that the Articles of the Church, (though never so carefully fram'd) may come to loose all sort of Benefit that the Church can propose to reap from them; and the Exposition before us must be allow'd to be the first Attempt of this kind of any note, to encourage any such thing.

It must be confess'd, that there was once an Author (but such a one as ought not to be nam'd the same day with my Lord Bishop of *Sarum*) one *Christopher Davenport* a Franciscan Fryar, known by the Name of *Franciscus de Sancta Glarâ*, who by the Help of a Paraphrastical Exposition of our Articles, endeavour'd to make them speak the Romish Dialect. But, as on the other hand, Sincerity or Writing in earnest, is not what that Tribe of Men will always pretend to, when they are to encounter an Adversary; so neither, on the other hand, can that Design at best, pretend to compare with my Lord of *Sarum's* Scheme, as upon a particular Inquiry made into the nature of each, would very plain-

plainly appear. Something of the same nature may be trac'd in Mr. *Baxter's* Writings; but he never could nurse up his Notion to any Maturity: He made a shift to get over most of the Articles, (he himself indeed, not to do him wrong, is suppos'd to have dispens'd with them all when Episcopally ordain'd :) He made it easie enough to subscribe to all the Articles except three or four: But those which concern the Church and Church-Government in his riper Years he knew not how to reconcile either with Presbytery in general, or with his own peculiar Fancy of Parochial Episcopacy. This was a Task too hard for him, and he was fain to leave it to a more able Pen, and to one of a much greater Character to accomplish.

And much the same may be said of the Franciscan Fryar; it was his Misfortune to live too soon, so as not to have seen my Lord of *Sarum's* Exposition: For by the help of the Latitude allow'd by his Lordship to different Grammatical Senses, he might have made it very hard to be so run down, as * *Dr. Ward* in a Letter to Bishop *Usher*, relates he was at * *Ushers Letters*, p. 473. Let. 18r. a Publick Commencement at *Cambridge*, in the Vice-Chancellour's Speech for pretending to reconcile our Articles with the Decisions of the Council of *Trent*: a very notable Undertaking for a Fryar it was; but not to be effected unless by the Help of my Lord of *Sarum's* Scheme, without incurring the Imputation of notorious *Prevarication*.

So much as hath been said, may suffice to shew that our Expositor's Scheme for Latitude tends to introduce *Diversity of Opinions* into the Church by encouraging Persons of very different Perswasions, and opposite Constitutions, to subscribe to the same Articles, under colour of the Words admitting different Grammatical Senses: A thing, which did not the Title of the Articles sufficiently provide against, yet to suppose to be intended by the Church, would not redound very much to its Credit, if † Bishop *Taylor* in † *Duct. Dubit.* lib. 4. c. 4. v. 23. §. 1, 2, 3. his *Ductor Dubitantium*, be in the right: Where, speaking of the Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of Subscribing with this sort of Reserve, he has this Expression; *This is the last Remedy, but the worst: It bath in it something of Craft, but*
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very little of Ingenuity; and if it can serve the Ends of Peace or of External Charity, it cannot serve the Ends of Truth, Holiness, and Christian Simplicity. To talk of what the Words will bear, may do well enough in Pleadings upon Deeds and Covenants in Common Law; but where Religion is concern'd, Men are suppos'd to proceed according to Equity, and with Sincerity; When the Sense of the Church is any way so made known to us, as that we cannot well be ignorant of it, without shutting our Eyes so close as to amount to an affected Blindness, we are not to pretend to put Constructions of our own upon the Decisions of the Church, under colour of some Grammatical Sense the Words may with some force be made to bear; though, where we have no such way of coming to the right Sense of an Article, and the Church by its Silence may seem to leave Men to their own Thoughts; there no doubt, all Men are at liberty, the Church not having thought it needful to provide against *Diversities of Opinions* in things of less moment, determining only the more Essential necessary Doctrines in Religion; but what does appear to be determined by the Church in her Articles, that we ought to assent to and agree with her in, or not subscribe.

And to frame such a Scheme for Latitude in subscribing, as to take in Men of different Judgments as to the very things contained in the Articles to the which they subscribe, is what very plainly tends to *introduce such a Latitude as the Articles were framed to avoid.*

Though thus the first Head of Complaint cannot but appear to be just, his Lordship having laid too wide a Foundation for Latitude, in making his Three Grammatical Senses of the Third Article, to be the measure of what he would allow in subscribing to all the rest; yet before we go any further, it may be needful by way of Digression, to obviate an Objection which may seem to lie against the opposing such Latitude as the Exposition encourages, it being generally by all People taken for granted, that such was the Moderation of the Church of *England* in compiling the

Articles, as well as in all other her Proceedings, as to leave a great deal of room for Liberty of Opinion in several things. This is what it may be needful to say somewhat of, and set in its True Light, before we proceed, in hopes that if my Lord of *Sarum* be at leisure to consider it, he may think fit to change his Scheme for Latitude in subscribing, and qualifie it accordingly.

It cannot be denied but that our Church in framing her Articles as the Effect of Moderation, did design a great deal of Latitude and Freedom of Thought for the Ease of Subscribers, not tying Men up at the rate the Church of *Rome* is known to do all those of her Communion, determining things which are better left undetermined, requiring many things to be believed as Articles of Faith, which have no Foundation from Scripture, and forcing an Assent in all alike, under the pain of Excommunication. These are Impositions we are freed from, having nothing of this sort to complain of: and if this were all, it were enough to make the Difference between the Church of *Rome* and us, as to Terms of Communion to be very considerable: But this is far from being all, the Moderation of the Church of *England* goes much further as will appear upon a due Enquiry made into the Nature of it, as well with respect to the Laity as the Clergy.

I. The Moderation of the Church of *England* shews it self in this, that the Generality of the Laity are not bound up to a strict Acknowledgment of the Articles, otherwise than as they shall be found to be comprized in the Creeds, or as they are evidently true in themselves, and may be proved from Scripture, or at most in the way of Articles of Peace and Acquiescence in the Doctrine of the Church to the which they belong; which being read to them sometimes, to the end that they may be acquainted with them, they are not to contradict them or affirm them to be erroneous, but keep their Opinion of them to themselves, if there be any thing in them that they do not like.

A Layman may happen to be unacquainted with the Contents of several of the Articles all his Life-time, and yet not be charged with Insincerity for professing himself to be a true Son of the Church of *England*; but 'tis otherwise with all such as are of the Ministry: No one ought to pretend to offer himself for the Ministry; or in order to his Admittance into it, presume to subscribe to the Articles, without having first duly weighed and consider'd every one of the Articles, it being the Design of the Church by the Subscription enjoyned, to be secure of their being rightly principled themselves, who are to teach others so as not to mis-lead, least, should *the Blind lead the Blind*, both might be in danger of falling into the Ditch.

2. Our Church is so far from following the Example of the Church of *Rome*, in denouncing *Anathema's* on those that do not believe every particular Article, that we have but one direct Instance of it throughout the whole Sett; and that is by way of Enforcement of the 18th Article, as the Conclusion of several that go before, relating to the same material Fundamental Doctrine of our being saved by the Merits of Christ alone, and upon no other Bottom whatsoever. This the Church has thought fit to lay great Stress upon, and yet says nothing but what was first preach'd by our Saviour himself, and by St. *Paul*, to whose Words, *Gal. 1. 8.* in all likelihood the very Phrase of *Accursed* was design'd to refer.

3. The Moderation of the Church of *England* is very remarkable, in making so very few Doctrines to be as Conditions of Communion (contrary to what is objected in the Beginning of the Introduction;) it may be truly said, there is in our Articles very little, if any thing more than what is either borrow'd from the Creeds, or what are Doctrines highly fit to be asserted, as in Subserviency to Fundamental Truths, or what is directly intended as in opposition to Popery, and to fence against the

the erroneous Doctrines and superstitious Practices and Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, or such as act for them under some Disguise or other. It were very easie to shew that there are very few things laid down in our Articles, which can, according to the Bishop of *Sarum's* Notion, be termed *Doctrinal Points*; not one especially of all the ten middle Articles, from the 9th, to the 19th, being such as he supposes them to be; all of them, on the contrary, in truth being one continued Explanation of, or an Enlargement upon, the most necessary Part of our Christian Faith, couched under the latter part of the Apostles Creed, in very few Words, viz. *the Forgiveness of Sins*, and *Life Everlasting*. We have in these Articles the Nature and Consequence, as well of Original as of Actual Sin. Our Incapacity of doing any thing as of our selves, is acknowledged, that our Sins must be forgiven us by the Merits of Christ; we must be justified by Christ alone, and through Faith in him, in order to eternal Life: It is he alone that calls us, and makes our Peace with God. Here we are told how God did decree and purpose from all Eternity these Means of Salvation to Mankind for the sake of his Son; That before the Foundations of the World were laid, he pre-ordain'd Man to Life, *calling, or electing*, or chusing all such to be his *adopted Children* and *Vessels of Honour*, that should believe in his Son, and live according to the Rules which he hath given us in the Gospel; and at the same time excluding all from the Benefit of this *Eternal Predestination, Justification* and *Election*, who should reject these means of Salvation thus tender'd by Christ, and to be attain'd by Faith in him, and by no other means whatsoever.

This is the whole of what is contained in all those Ten Articles, and is the Substance of several Homilies, and nothing truly controversial or disputable about *Absolute Decrees*, or the *Efficacy of God's Grace*, but plain necessary Christian Truths will be found to be here laid down and asserted: Some few Scholastick Terms indeed (as the known Language of the Learned of those times)

do sometimes occur: But if we carefully examine every Proposition, and do not go about to lay Weight upon single Words, and draw Inferences from them, such as *Predestination, Election, Vessels of Honour*, or the like: If we only look to what is fairly affirmed or denied, and go no further, we shall not meet with any one Proposition in all the Ten Articles, but what every Orthodox Christian will be ready to subscribe, let them vary never so in their Sentiments. Here is really nothing but solid Divinity, wherein all Men in a manner agree, that are not Favourers of *Pelagius* or *Socinus*.

So that upon a due Examination of the matter, my Lord of *Sarum* will be found to have spent a great deal of time and pains upon the middle Sett of Articles, to little purpose; and particularly in his Exposition of the 17th Article of *Predestination and Election* (wherein he seems to think he has done his best) he will be found to shoot all the while at Rovers, and wide of the Mark, loading the Article with Questions which do not belong to it, and scarce saying any thing of what it really and truly imports, as will be easily shewn in its due place.

In some other Countries a great deal of stress may have been laid upon some abstruse Notions wherein the Terms of Art may be the same as our Articles make use of, or they at least are made to be the Titles of them (though they are also Scriptural, and for that reason therefore chiefly retain'd;) such as *Justification, Election, Predestination, &c.* And about these the *Lutheran* and *Calvinist* shall have hot Disputes: But these Points which make so much Noise abroad, our Church says nothing of at all; She is altogether silent as to what their Quarrel is about, and would have all her Children be so too: The meddling with Fatality, and Prescience, and Reprobation, and other such Matters as handled by Foreign Divines, is what hath been often forbid, and is always discountenanc'd by our Church: Nor is there any thing to be found in any of the Articles, which by being asserted, does naturally engage a Subscriber

to concern himself about them; and they that from Words only and Modes of Expression, go about to draw any of our Articles into those Quarrels, do our Church a great deal of wrong. It is the Effect of Moderation in our Church, to avoid determining such over-nice Questions, as have occasion'd those unhappy Divisions, things about which Men may dispute to the Worlds End, and be never the wiser; and which, after all, there is no Occasion for Men so nicely to enquire into, as to make them so much as any part of their Study, so far as Christianity is concern'd. The Method our Church hath taken, is to keep to such Doctrines and Positions as are Scriptural: And whoever makes any of our Articles to be transcribed or copied from *St. Austin*, or from any other uninspired Writer, very much mistakes the matter. Those very Articles my Lord of *Sarum* points at, were in all likelihood intended to be a Transcript from the Scriptures in general, and from *St. Paul* in particular, and from no one else.

4. *Lastly*, The Moderation of the Church of *England* being such, as to be very sparing in her Decisions and Determinations of any thing, but what in some respect or other appears to her to be in a manner necessary to be held and maintain'd towards the securing an Orthodox Faith, there cannot but be very great Scope for Latitude and Diversities of Opinions in lesser matters, and such as are not stated or defin'd. No Church allows more Liberty of Thought as to Things in their own nature indifferent, or which are merely Philosophical, and not plainly Theological; or, I rather should say, Evangelical-revealed Truths, and in some measure Fundamental: But where the Church thinks fit to dictate and define, there her Children (such especially as are of the Ministry, or are to instruct others) are not to contradict or gainsay; but on the contrary, they must agree with her, and with one another, and consequently, as employ'd by her, must speak her Sense, or not pretend to be sent by her.

And least any one should plead Ignorance in this case; and take the Advantage of ambiguous Terms and Expressions (if any such there be) or pretend to several Grammatical Senses contrary to one another, it hath been already observed, and it is what ought to be observ'd, that the Church hath many other Ways whereby to let us know her true meaning in her Articles, which when we know, we must not take the Liberty to dissent from, and yet for worldly Advantage subscribe. Where either the Canons, the Liturgy, or Homilies, the uninterrupted Practice and known Doctrine of the Church ever since the framing the Articles come in by way of Information or Testimony, we must not shut our Eyes against such Light: But where there is nothing of this, and one Article does not explain another, nor the Article to be subscribed, explain it self; there we are at liberty, and not at all bound up to any one Grammatical Sense more than to another; in such Case, and such only Men may subscribe the same Article, and yet be of contrary Opinions: the Reason being plainly this, that either the Church is altogether silent (as she is as to many Points which some will needs tack to our Articles, though they do not belong to them) or it does no way appear, but that one Opinion may be as agreeable to what the Church would have us believe, as another, as not being of that moment, as to come within the express Decisions of the Church in any authentick Obligatory Way.

Hence it is that Men of Learning, notwithstanding their having subscrib'd to our Articles, may be of different Opinions as to some things relating to Christ's Descent into Hell; they may differ, not only as to the nature of the Place to the which our Saviour went when dead, but also as to the Design of his Descent, or what he did in the Place which the Creed and our Article (keeping to the Term made use of in the Creed) calls Hell; neither the nature of the Place, nor the Design of Christ's going to it, is defined in the Article; only so much is said, as in opposition to the *Apollinarian* Heresie, to assert that Christ being perfect Man as well as perfect God, his Body was not
only

only actuated by the Godhead, but had a Humane Soul, which Soul went to the Place appointed it when the Body was laid into a Grave. This excludes the Bishop's second Grammatical Sense of the Grave and Hell signifying the same, and yet leaves a great deal of Scope for Critical Learning, and for Search into Antiquity, and the meaning of several Texts in Scripture, the better to discover what neither the Creed nor the Church in the Article hath thought fit to define. The same is to be said for those Articles, upon which some have grafted so many intricate Questions concerning God's Decrees, and the Efficacy of Grace. It is a great Mistake to think that any wise Man of our Church that either understands himself, or the Articles, or the Duty of an honest Man, believes those Articles to be a Transcript of any Man's Doctrine, from whom at the same time, they differ in the very things defined (as my Lord of *Sarum* is pleas'd to suggest in the beginning of his Preface;) but the Reason why so many have taken the liberty to differ upon those Points, is because they are really not defined in our Articles; nor is it at all likely that the Church did intend to trouble her Subscribers with such nice Speculations; but on the contrary, to keep to the more substantial necessary Truths, in the way of Moderation and Indulgence: So that neither of these Instances will stand the Bishop in any stead in the way he endeavours to make use of them: These shall not warrant a Latitude in subscribing any Article in a Sense different from that, wherein either by the same Article, or by any other, or by the current Doctrine or Practice of the Church, it appears to have been fram'd. To differ in things not determin'd by the Church, will not warrant Diversity of Opinions in things which plainly appear to be determin'd, and in which we cannot but know the Intention of the Church.

The Moderation of the Church of *England*, with respect to her Articles, the better to secure her Doctrine, is much the same as it is with respect to her Canons and Rubricks, for the Establishment of Ecclesiastical Discipline and a Uniformity

formity of Worship. Nothing of Rigour can be complain'd of in either, no straining upon the Consciences of Men, nothing more required than needs must, to make our Faith come up to the Scope and Design of the Gospel, and our way of serving God be according to the Apostles Rule of having all things done decently and in order : But when our Doctrines are fix'd, and our Rules laid down, those that call themselves moderate Men, do very much mistake the Moderation of our Church, in making it to consist in waving this or that Doctrine, or in being unconcerned at the Omission of this or that outward Performance or Ceremony. Such sort of Moderation is what our Church disclaims and discountenances upon all Occasions: She is easie in her Injunctions, but not at all remiss in requiring a due Conformity and Obedience. The more indulgent she is in what she enjoins, the more Reason there is to expect a punctual Obedervance, and to resent any wilful Failure therein. All Degrees of unwarrantable Liberty, are the more blameable under an easie Rein. If we are really ignorant of what our Church would have us believe and teach, it is somewhat; but if we have sufficient means whereby to know it, and do know it; if we are sensible, and in our Consciences believe the Church did intend one thing, and at the same time take the liberty to dissent from her, and be of another mind, and yet resolve to intrude into the Ministry by subscribing to her Articles, upon pretence that the Words may be otherwise understood according to true Grammar, this is neither the part of a true Son of the Church of *England*, nor of an honest Man.

The Lenity of a Church is not to be abus'd, or made to serve as a Cloak to Prevarication and dishonest Practices: Men must not thence conclude they may do any thing with her, and presume upon her good Nature and Forbearance: Men must not subscribe to Conditions of Communion, and both believe and teach the contrary. This is not fair dealing; and should it be countenanc'd, ought not to be call'd Moderation, but a Snare. To lay a Scene for
such

such Latitude, is what too naturally leads Men into Temptation, and gives so much countenance to Deceit, as it is not to be suppos'd my Lord of *Sarum* can, upon second Thoughts, approve of it. The very Design of having Articles to be subscrib'd, is hereby frustrated, and ill Men shall be let into the Church, whose Principles will prompt them to pull it down as soon as they can, that they may build it their own way. God is said to *make Men to be of one mind in an House*, and that in his House especially, which is the Church, they should be so, is one main thing intended by the Articles; the Framers thereof proposing thereby to *avoid diversities of Opinions, and to stablish Consent touching true Religion*. Whoever therefore goes about to score out a way for Men to espouse quite contrary Opinions touching the very things to the which they subscribe, and make the Articles, as well as the Subscribers, wage War with one another, must needs be to blame: And all such Undertakings may be truly said, to *tend to the introducing such a Latitude and Diversity of Opinions, as the Articles were framed to avoid*.

The Second Head of Complaint consider'd.

This being said of the First Article of Complaint against my Lord Bishop of *Sarum's* Exposition, come we now to the Second, *viz.*

That there are many Passages in the Exposition of several of the Articles which appear to be contrary to the true Meaning of them, and to other receiv'd Doctrines of our Church.

Though so full a Proof of this, as may possibly be expected, would require a more particular Examination of the Exposition Article by Article, than is here propos'd; yet if we were to look no further than to what hath been already observ'd, some sort of Guess might be made, how far this Assertion will admit of pregnant Proof.

Here

Here are two things complain'd of, both of them fit to be consider'd. First, with respect to the Articles themselves, as some Passages in the Exposition appear to be contrary to the true Meaning of them: And *2dly*, with respect to some other receiv'd Doctrines of the Church, and which are sufficiently known to be so; though they may not perhaps in express Terms be contain'd in the Articles, there are Passages in the Exposition which appear to be contrary, as well to the one as to the other; and this will be the more easily allow'd, if either be proved, when we consider, that whatever is contrary to the one, cannot well but be contrary to the other also. To be sure, what is contrary to the Articles, is contrary to the receiv'd Doctrine; and whatever is contrary to the receiv'd Doctrine, cannot easily escape being contrary to the Design at least of one Article or other: since in this Body of Articles, the main Substance of the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, is known to be contain'd. However, to make this matter the more clear, it may not be amiss to give some Instances of each: Nor will it be found to be less blameable in it self, though possibly not so directly within the Reach of the Canon, to contradict some common receiv'd Doctrines, than it is to put false Glosses and Interpretations upon the Articles themselves, contrary to the true Intent and Meaning of them.

It hath been already observ'd that the Church hath many other ways, besides the having this Body of Articles, whereby to inform her Children what her Mind is of things fit for them either to know or do. As, *1st*. The Book of Homilies, which is in effect subscribed to, or at least approv'd of in gross, as containing good wholesome Doctrine under the *35th* Article. *2dly*, The Liturgy which is subscrib'd to under part of the *36th* Canon, and publickly declar'd to be assented to. We declare, or assent and consent to it in the Face of our Congregations; and one part of it, *viz.* that of Consecration and Ordination, is subscrib'd to in the *36th* Article. *3dly*, The Canons, which the Clergy are in some sort oblig'd to observe upon Oath;

Oath; and which are the undoubted Acts of the Church, as agreed to, and subscrib'd at first by both Houses of Convocation. 4. There is also such a thing as an uninterrupted Practice, as to Discipline and common Consent as to Doctrine, in some things which are transmitted down to us in the Writings of many Learned Men since the Reformation, who in their time were zealous Asserters of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Establish'd Church.

By all these several Ways we are let to know the Sense of the Church to the which we belong, and whose Doctrines and Rules we are suppos'd to follow and embrace. If indeed there were nothing of all this, and the 39 Articles were the only means afforded us besides the Scriptures, whereby to learn our Religion, and things should happen to be obscurely express'd in them; it were perhaps reasonable, that such as may be competently well assur'd of their being capable of judging for themselves in things of that kind, should take the liberty of subscribing in such a sense as the Words will bear, according to the Rules of true Grammar, and at least seemingly proper Signification: but yet even then no one should take upon him so to expound an Article, as either to make it contradict it self, or be inconsistent with any other of the Articles; or so as to make the Church be inconsistent with it self, in requiring us either to act or declare any thing contrary to what we subscribe: Which being premis'd, come we now to consider what sort of Liberty is taken in the Exposition before us; beginning first with what concerns the Articles themselves, before we speak of other Doctrines.

The second Grammatical Sense of the Third Article, which in the Exposition seems to be preferr'd before any other, hath been already shewn to be inconsistent with the very Words of the Article it self, if we will suppose the Church either to speak properly, without Tautology, or indeed to speak Sense.

To discredit all the Three Creeds, and lessen as well their Antiquity as their Authority, cannot but be acknowledg'd to be against the Intent and Design of the 8th. Article, and

in effect against the Article it self, which says, **They ought thoroughly to be receiv'd and believ'd.** What the Article calls *Nice Creed* and *Athanasius Creed*, it would have been proper for an Expofitor to make the best of, in giving some Reason (as he very easily might) why they may well enough be so call'd, rather than to take so much pains to shew why they ought not to be so reputed. And as to the latter, there is this moreover to be said, That the parting Blow given it, cannot but be very acceptable to the *Socinian*, and such whose Business it is to disparage it, and run it down, in hopes it may one day be laid aside: Instead of enforcing the Reception of it upon any other Motive, than barely as it may be supported by down-right Scripture Proof, instead of setting it off to any sort of Advantage, after having lower'd it sufficiently in point of Antiquity, saying *p. 106. It was never heard of till the 8th Century*, and grew into credit in Ages that were not critical enough to judge of what was genuine and what was spurious. Though this be a sufficient Intimation that the Creed it self is *spurious*, and was at first impos'd upon some ignorant Ages, and so grew into credit by degrees, no body knows how nor when; yet, least what seem'd needful to be said concerning the Apostles Creed, and of Creeds in general, as to their being receiv'd for the sake of the Doctrine they contain (which is as little as can well be said) least this should look too much in favour of the *Athanasian Creed*; a sort of *Caveat* is enter'd at last to prevent any ones having too good an Opinion of it. The Exposition concludes with these Words, that they may be sure to rest upon the Reader's Mind: *Though we must acknowledge, that the Creed ascribed to Athanasius, as it was none of his, so it was never established by any general Council.*

Whether this be so in Fact, or not, is a Question that does not lie before us at this time: But whether such a Compliment pass'd upon this Creed in particular, does very well comport with the Article, which is made in favour of all the three Creeds, is very easie to determine.

But.

But to proceed: If what hath been already suggested, and in some measure hath been shewn, be granted; that the ten Articles, from the 9th. to the 19th. do principally, if not altogether, concern the great Fundamental Doctrine of the Christian Religion, of *Forgiveness of Sins* and *Eternal Salvation*, tender'd to Mankind by the Mediation of Christ, notwithstanding Man's Original Corruption, and Fall from Righteousness: That notwithstanding his having been dead in Sin, and thereby become incapable of doing any thing that of it self can be pleasing or acceptable unto God; yet is Life Eternal procur'd for him, and he is *ordain'd* and *call'd* thereto by God's *Eternal Purpose* and *Secret Counsel*, through the Mediation of Christ, upon condition of believing in him, and of obeying his Gospel; and by no other means, or upon any other terms whatever, can we hope to be sav'd. If this be the main Scope and Design of all that Set of Articles, exclusive of all abstruse disputable less momentous Points, about *Justification*, *Free Will*, *Predestination*, &c. (which some have to so little purpose spent so many Thoughts upon) if upon a right View taken of those Articles, it so prove, that all the odd Notions of some People, as to *Reprobation* and *Fatality* (as the Result of Divine Prescience) are industriously avoided, then the Exposition given us of these Articles, which is to revive all those Questions, cannot but be contrary to the Design of the Articles. So often to bring upon the Stage *God's Decrees*, and the *Efficacy of Grace*, and the *Doctrine of St. Austin*, and the old Stories of *Sublapsarians* and *Supralapsarians*, is but to do wrong both to the Reader and to the Articles themselves, upon which such Speculations are grafted, as do no way belong to them.

If from our Homilies, and several Collects in our Liturgy, the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as to what is intended in those Articles, sufficiently appears; then to lay down several other Opinions, and leave them uncontradicted, and encourage a Latitude of subscribing in any of

those Senses, is so to expound the Articles, as to make way for Opinions contrary to the Articles themselves.

And as to the last of these Articles, viz. the 18th, *Of obtaining Salvation only by the Name of Christ* (which whoever contradicts, is by the Article declar'd to be *accurs'd*;) whether the Exposition be consistent with the Words of the Article, may be gather'd from a remarkable Passage, which must be allow'd to have been a very unhappy Mistake (if altogether owing to Inadvertency) and that is the better to take off the severe part of the Article, to be told, as we are, p. 171. *That there is a great difference between being saved by the Law, and saved in the Law. The one, his Lordship says, is condemned, but not the other.* Now this is a Difference the Church was so far from intending should be made, that a particular care is taken to fence against it, by making the Latin Article to be *in lege*, and the English *by the Law*; and it is well known, that both alike, as well the Latine as the English, were signed in Convocation. Thus the Difference the Expofitor would have to be observ'd, proves none at all; but at the same time it cannot but be observ'd, that here was a very fair Endeavour to take off the *Anathema* laid upon such as *presume to say that every Man shall be sav'd by the Law or Sect which he professeth*: Which is a thing there are too many do presume to say in the Age we happen to live in.

What hath been already said of the 23d Article, may suffice to prove, that to call an insisting upon Episcopal Ordination in opposition to other Constitutions, *Magisterial Stiffness*, (making it only to be found in the *hotter Spirits*) is neither consistent with the Design of the Article, nor with the receiv'd Doctrine of the Church. To imagine that an Episcopal Church should frame an Article so loosely, as to leave room for Presbytery or Independency, is very particular, and what it will not be very easie to persuade any one to believe; and yet if this be not so, unless this be granted, thus to manage the Article as to suppose no less, is certainly to make it speak against it self.

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What is given us under the 27th Article of BAPTISM, so far as Infant-Baptism is concern'd therein, very plainly contradicts the Article it self, p. 306. It is taken for granted that *There is no express Rule or Precept in the New Testament for the Baptism of Infants*, and yet in the Article it is affirm'd that **The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church as most agreeable with the Institution of Christ.** *Ut cum institutione Christi optime congruat*, saith the Latin; which takes off all seeming Ambiguity of our English Expression *most agreeable*, and shews the Church's Sense to be, that Infant-Baptism is as much according to Christ's Institution as any thing can be; which if it be, and nothing can be said to be instituted by Christ, but what is recorded in Scripture, it cannot be true that there is *no express Rule or Precept* for Infant-Baptism in the New Testament, unless there be such a thing as a Real Distinction between Divine Institution, and Divine Rule or Precept, and the one may be without the other.

Whether there be or be not any express Text in the New Testament for Infant-Baptism in particular, as in contradistinction to that of the Adult, may be a Question fit to be considered in its proper Place: But if the Article says, as it doth, that it is *according to Christ's Institution*, the only Question at present, is, whether, to say there is no *Express Rule or Precept in the New Testament*, is not contrary to the Article. That it is contrary to the Article, will be the more easily admitted, if we consider one thing, which the Expositor does not seem to have been aware of; and that is this, that there may be an *express Rule or Precept* where there are not express Words for every individual Person concerned in the Injunction, as is evident from Christ's Institution of the other Sacrament, *Do this as oft as ye do it, in remembrance of me*, supposes an Obligation laid upon all that are capable of *remembering* Christ, so as to include Women as well as Men: And tho' there is no one Text in Scripture that expressly says, that Women are to receive the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or
that

The Second Head of Complaint consider'd.

that they did receive it; yet no one ought to doubt of their being included in the *Institution, Rule, or Precept*. In like manner the Institution of Baptism being deliver'd in general Terms, as general as 'tis possible, *viz. Joh. 3. 3. εἰν μὴ τις, Except any one, &c.* (not except a Man, as we happen to translate it) and again *Mat. 28. 29. Go and disciple all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* Since Children are by the Divine Institution of Circumcision shewn to be capable of being admitted to a Covenant of Grace, and they are nowhere in the Gospel excepted or excluded, it necessarily follows that they are included in the *Institution*, and consequently that there is an *express Rule or Precept* in the New Testament for their being baptiz'd, though Infants are not named in express Words.

As the foregoing Instances (to the which many more might be added) may suffice to prove that the *Exposition* before us is in many respects inconsistent with what is contain'd in the *Articles*: In like manner, it will be as easie, and indeed more easie, to give many Instances of its not agreeing with the common receiv'd Doctrines of the Church where the Articles themselves may have happen'd to escape.

Some few, in the way of Specimen, may suffice to prove a thing so very obvious to any common Reader, that applies himself to the Examination of the Book, with any degree of Attention.

✱ And, not to go back again, take we the very next Article, *viz. the 28th. Concerning the Lord's Supper*. This Sacrament our Liturgy in the Communion Service teaches us to call a *Holy Mystery*: We are by it made in a Spiritual manner *to eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood*; the Spiritual Nourishment we receive from it, is compar'd to the Natural Recruit our Bodies have from Bread and Wine. Our Catechism tells us, *That the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper*. We are there told of an extraordinary, inward, Spiritual Efficacy: There is *an inward and Spiritual Grace*; and that to eat of the Sacramental Bread,
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and to drink of that Cup, is as the *Means whereby we receive* that Grace as well as *Pledges to assure us thereof*. After this, and considering withal, what is known to be the Doctrine of the *Lutheran Churches*, and the *French Protestants*, as taught by *Calvin*, and of the *Greek Church*, and what is found to be the current Doctrine of the *Primitive Christians*, and *Fathers*, and of our first Reformers, and of most Writers since the Reformation of any note; and the Article itself making mention more than once of our receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, one would not expect such an Exposition to be affix'd to this Article, especially as to the *Mysterious Part*, as shall make this Sacrament as plain, and intelligible, and void of Mystery, as any other Evangelical Precept. We are told p. 314. *If this Sacrament had been that mysterious and unconceivable thing which it hath been since believed to be, we cannot imagine but that the Book of the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles should have contained fuller Explanations of it, and larger Instructions about it.* If Transubstantiation were that *mysterious unconceivable thing* referr'd to in these Words, it were indeed unreasonable to expect an Explanation of it in Scripture, it being a thing altogether unknown to the inspir'd Writers, and not to be heard of for the first five or six hundred Years after Christ, or any colour for it; but that some things relating to this Sacrament may be fit to be believed, and yet be left unexplained in the way of Mystery, may well enough be suppos'd, if we consider that the Case is the same with respect to that which is even still more Mysterious, *viz.* the Doctrine of the Trinity. There are, no doubt, Expressions enough in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and in the *Epistles*, as well as in the *Gospels*, to shew that this Holy Sacrament was intended to be one of the great mysteries of the Christian Religion; and therefore no wonder if it be not unfolded to every body's Mind, and in such manner as to make it cease to be a Mystery.

The Second Head of Complaint consider'd.

It is easie to imagine that the more mysterious any thing is design'd to be, in the way of Trial or Exercise of our Faith, and to heighten our Admiration of the God we adore, the less is said of it in Scripture, in the way of Exposition, to bring it down to our Comprehension and Capacities : And hence it is, that there is so very little, if any thing, to be met with in Scripture, to explain the Trinity; nor is it what any one ought to pretend to explain, any further than to prove that a Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, according to what is reveal'd to us in Scripture, is to be worshipp'd.

It is plain, that the God we worship does expect a double Homage from us ; as he is a Spirit, he will be worshipp'd in Spirit : He expects an inward as well as an outward Obedience : There must be a Submission of the Understanding as well as of the Will : There must be an Assent to what God is pleas'd to reveal, though never so hard to be understood, as well as a Conformity in our Actions to his Laws in things which may not perhaps be very easie to Flesh and Blood. As this may be said of Mysteries in general, so it may be truly said of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in particular, that there is enough revealed to us in Scripture concerning it, to shew it was design'd to be a Mystery, and consequently that we ought to look upon it as amounting to something more than what the Exposition seems to endeavour to bring it to in the following Words.

We do therefore understand our Saviour's Institution thus ; That as he was to give his Body to be broken, and his Blood to be shed for our Sins ; so he intended that this his Death and Suffering should be still commemorated by all such as look for Remission of Sins by it, not only in their Thoughts and Devotions, but in a visible Representation which he appointed should be done in Symbols that should be both very plain and simple, and yet very expressive of that which he intended should be remember'd by them.

All this may be very well ; but this is far from being all that our Church teaches us to understand by this Divine Institution. Here is indeed in this Account of it, a Com-
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memoration and Representation of Christ's Death, not only in Thought and Devotion, but in Symbols sufficiently expressive of the thing to be remembred: But if this be all, what becomes of the strengthening and refreshing of our Souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, where is the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ as the inward part or thing signified in this Sacrament, over and above the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ? Where is the mysterious Conveyance of God's Grace whereby we are cleans'd from our Sins, and reconcil'd to God? There is a great deal of this kind an Expositor of this Article might in defence of the Doctrine of our Church contained in our Catechism, have found good Occasion to enlarge upon; and something at least, of this, might have been more proper than to dictate the contrary with an Air of Disdain, as if all that have writ another way, were beneath our Expositor's Notice or Regard.

Should any one happen in his own private judgment to favour the *Zwinglian* Doctrine in this particular, it were certainly however but fit to keep it to himself, and not publish it to the World, professedly opposing the common-receiv'd Doctrine of the Church of *England* in so material a Point, under colour of expounding her Articles. For whether the Article it self be so very express or not (and perhaps for some Reasons at the time when the Articles were fram'd, it was thought most proper not to say more than is said;) yet, as it certainly does say more than the Exposition any where comes up to; so the Church, upon adding the Doctrine of the Sacraments many years after to the Catechism, hath sufficiently explain'd her self; in-somuch, as were a Declaration to be penn'd against the Expositor's low Sense of the Sacrament, it is not easie to say how any thing could be more full and express for receiving the Body and Blood of Christ spiritually and by Faith, than the Words of the Catechism are: And what we are enjoind to teach our Children, may very properly be termed the common receiv'd Doctrine of our Church.

It having been sufficiently labour'd in the Exposition to bring down the usual Notion we have of the Lord's Supper, not allowing it to be *mysterious*, but making it very plain and intelligible, by reducing it to little more than a Commemoration or Representation of Christ's Sufferings (which some may be apt to think may be as effectual in our Closets, as with the usual Formality of going to Church, or of kneeling at the Lord's Table,) such Doctrine bearing no proportion to the Dignity and Solemnity of so Divine an Institution: It is the less to be wonder'd at, that so little regard is elsewhere had to *Excommunication*, or what we call the Power of the Keys as to *binding* and *loosing*. The being debarr'd the Benefit of the Sacrament by Ecclesiastical Censure and Authority, must needs fall short of its due Efficacy, when the Sacrament it self is brought so very low: And whether in these two Particulars of *Excommunication* and *Absolution*, the Exposition before us doth not advance Interpretations of Scripture, which do by no means come up to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, may be fit to be consider'd in this place, though to be met with elsewhere, and not under this Article.

The Power of Excommunication and of Absolution, the Church of Christ hath all along been suppos'd to be entrusted with by our Saviour. As to the first, the usual Notion which our English Divines have of it, may be gather'd from the 33^d. Article to the which they subscribe, where we are told that a *Person which by open Denunciation of the Church is rightly cut off from the Unity of the Church, and Excommunicate*, ought to be taken of the Multitude of the Faithful, as a *Heathen* and a *Publican*, until he be openly reconciled by *Penance*, &c. Whoever reads this Article, must needs conclude that those that fram'd it, had our Saviour's Expression before them, *Mat. 18. 17.* and copied from his Words, *viz. Tell it to the Church; and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican.* Here the *Person Excommunicate* is in the way of Punishment, rendred unfit to be con-

convers'd with, which any Man that is but duly sensible of the Benefit of Society, (if there were nothing more in it, as no doubt there is, with respect to Spiritual Communion and Fellowship) would dread, and do his utmost not to incurr. Now quite contrary to any thing of this, our Expositor hath thought fit to put such a Construction upon the Words of our Saviour, as not only implies that the Compilers of the 33^d. Article did really not understand them, but also that the being shunn'd as a *Heathen and a Publican*, is not to be look'd upon as the Effect or Consequence of Excommunication, but antecedent thereto. His Words are these, p. 205. *If thy Brother sin against thee, first, private Endeavours were to be us'd; then the Interposition of Friends was to be try'd, and finally, the Matter was to be referred to the Body or Assembly to which they belonged: And those which could not be gained by such Methods, were no longer to be esteemed Brethren, but were to be look'd upon as very bad Men like HEATHENS. They might upon such Refractoriness, be excommunicated, and prosecuted afterwards in Temporal Courts, since they had by their Perverseness forfeited all sort of Right to that Tendernefs and Charity, which is due to true Christians.* Here is a sending Men to Temporal Courts for further Punishment, but no notice taken of *tell it to the Church*, any otherwise than as a few Neighbours got together, be it in a Vestry or Common-Hall, or the like, may be called the *Church*; and yet this Notion, which some late Socinian Writers are fond of, is here countenanced with that seeming Assurance, as scarce to allow the Text to be capable of any other Interpretation. We are very positively told, that *this Exposition does so fully agree to the Occasion and Scope of the Words, that there is no Colour of Reason to carry them further.*

That the Church of *England* hath thought fit to carry them further, is very plain; and, if we do but look to what follows, as well as to what goes before, it cannot but appear, that what begins with relation had to private Differences, plainly ends in the Supposition of an extraordinary Power lodg'd in the Church, whereto to have recourse upon

all extraordinary Occasions. What our Saviour subjoins to his Direction of telling it to *the Church*, and the Punishment annex to so notorious an Instance of Contumacy, as is *the neglecting to hear the Church*, we find is this: *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven.* Let any one add these Words to the foregoing Text of *tell it to the Church*, and then judge whether my Lord of Sarum's Exposition of it be such, as to leave no colour of reason to carry the Words further.

Though thus, by taking all our Saviour's Words together relating to this matter, one would think there were sufficient Colour to carry the Words of *tell it to the Church* a little further than the Exposition carries them; yet this is the less to be wondred at, when we come to find what Sense is put upon the Text it self, of *binding and loosing*, which we now come to consider, as a further Instance of departing from the known Doctrine of the Church, with respect to *Absolution*.

The Form of Absolution daily pronounced by the Priest, as well as that which we find us'd upon several particular Occasions, plainly supposes a Power lodg'd in the Church, of *remitting and retaining Sins* upon certain Conditions; as in Christ's Name, by his Authority, and in his stead; he having been pleased to promise a Ratification of the same in Heaven. This hath been always called *the Power of the Keys*, because our Saviour was pleased to give this Authority to his Apostles, and their Successors under the Metaphor of opening or shutting Heaven-Gates to those committed to their Charge, in such Ways, and according to such Terms and such Qualifications and Restrictions as the Gospel directs. But this is what the Expositor seems to have no Notion of at all; giving those Texts of Scripture, upon which this Doctrine is founded, a quite different turn, and making the Commission to be of a quite different nature, and such as in a manner was confined to the Apostles, or those of the first Ages of Christianity. What is given us upon this occasion, p. 190. is very remarkable, and therefore fit

to be transcrib'd: *The Words BINDING and LOOSING are used by the Jewish Writers in the sense of affirming or denying the Obligation of any Precept of the Law that might be in dispute. So according to this common Form of Speech, and the Sense formerly given to the Words KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, the meaning of these Words must be, that Christ committed to the Apostles, the dispensing his Gospel to the World, by which he authorized them to dissolve the Obligation of the Mosaical Laws, and to give other Laws to the Christian Church, which they should do under such visible Characters of a Divine Authority, empowering them and conducting them in it, that it should be very evident that what they did on Earth was also ratified in Heaven. These Words thus understood, carry in them a clear Sense which agrees with the whole Design of the Gospel.*

What is here meant by a clear Sense, is not easie to say; but that it is such a Sense as lays aside the receiv'd Doctrine of the Church of England, of a Power of binding and loosing lodg'd in the Church by Christ, not confined to the Apostles, but to continue to the World's end, is very plain. The Power of dispensing the Gospel, and discharging Men from the Obligation and Burden of the Ceremonial Law, is all the Expositor allows to belong to this Commission, given by our Saviour in so solemn a manner as we know it was, both before and after his Resurrection. It seems to have been design'd as a last Legacy bequeath'd to the Church in *Joh. 20. 22, 23. He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.*

As it is evident that here is a Power given amounting to more than barely preaching the Gospel, or dissolving the Obligation of the Mosaical Laws, or of introducing other Laws in the room of them, by their preaching with Authority: And as it would not be hard to shew that the Catholick Church hath in all Ages understood it to extend to more, viz. to a Relaxation at least of Ecclesiastical Censures and Punishments upon true Repentance; so it is most plain:

plain and undeniable, that our Church in particular in her Form of Ordination does intend something more; which if prov'd, is all that is needful at present whereby to shew that the *Exposition* is contrary to the receiv'd Doctrine of the Church.

Whoever looks into our Form of Ordination, will find that the Bishop gives the Priest his Commission at twice. First, he says, *Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our Hands, whose Sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose Sins thou dost retain, they are retained; and be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments, &c.* And then follows the Delivery of the Bible, saying, *Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, &c.*

This were a needless Formality thus to seem to give a twofold Commission, if they really and truly meant but one and the same thing. Here is plainly a Power given of *binding and loosing* distinct from the Power of preaching the Word of God, if we will allow the Expression of *forgiving and retaining Sins* to be the same as *binding and loosing*, or the one to be the Consequence of the other; and that they are the same, or at least referr to the same thing, may be gather'd from the promiscuous Use made of the Expressions by him that gives this extraordinary Power, and by their always being taken to be the same by all Commentators and Writers of any Note, and one may say by the Catholick Church, as appears by the primitive and uninterrupted Practice in all Ages, in pursuance of an Authority suppos'd to be deriv'd by vertue of our Saviour's Commission, *Matt. 18. 18. Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and Joh. 20. 23. Whose-soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose-soever Sins ye retain, they are retained.*

As for our Expofitor's Gloss, (if what is taken from such Authors as *Episcopus* and *Curcellæus* may be called my Lord of *Sarum's*) though it may very well agree with some sort of Divinity, and some sort of People, yet it is
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by no means suited either to the Doctrine or Discipline of the Church of *England*, or the Notions which our Divines have been bred up in. Such critical Discoveries and Refinings upon Scripture, may give some Men a Reputation with those that set up for Wit and Delight in Novelty, especially where the Discoveries tend to the lessening the Authority of the Church : But, of all things, they do suit the worst with an *Exposition* of our Articles.

It is what seems by no means to become an Expositor of them thus to pass by (as if not worth his regarding) such Men as *Juel, Usher, Mountacut* (the two former being referr'd. to by the latter upon this Subject, *p. 467. Orig. Eccl. Tomi primi pars poster.*) or such as Bishop *Andrews*, Dr. *Hammond*, and other Learned Divines, who follow St. *Chrysostom*, and the generality of the Fathers of the Church ; and instead of these, to borrow Notions in Divinity from *Leyden* and *Geneva*, and affect the following such Authors as are by no means approv'd of in our Universities ; but have been judged to be unorthodox and dangerous.

Upon the whole matter, after this cursory View taken of some few scatter'd Passages to be met with in the *Exposition*, it may be truly said, that over and above the Design of an unjustifiable Latitude which is discoverable throughout the Book, there is this further Observation to be made, though not express'd in the Complaint made in Convocation against it ; that though the Articles were many of them penn'd in opposition to several other Adversaries as well as the Papists, which our Church at that time had, and still continues to have to deal with, the Expositor is found unhappily to have kept his Eye so much upon one sort of Men, *viz.* the Papists, as in great measure to have overlook'd the Danger we are in from any of the rest. It must be acknowledged, that a great deal is extreamly well said against Popery ; but whether after the many admirable Tracts upon all Subjects of that kind the late Reign produced, so very much of the same again was so very needful at this time of day, his Lordship may best judge. But, as for all our other Adversaries, which are very numerous (and some

some of which we do not observe to be the more modest, or more inclining to Peace, for the Toleration granted them by the State) if against these our young Students in Divinity shall need any Help to vindicate their Articles, it is not to this *Exposition* of them they are to have recourse, if they hope for any Assistance: So far from it, that under the Name of an *Expositor*, his Lordship seems rather to set himself between the Church of *England* and the Dissenters, in the way of Moderator, and very often leaves the Point as he finds it: But when he does vouchsafe to speak out, considering he is himself a Bishop of the Church of *England*, he is willing to keep from the Imputation of Partiality. This he does in such manner as an unprejudic'd Reader would be apt to mistake him, as he himself tells us in his Preface, p. 6. some have really done, as to what side he is of, with respect to the Doctrine of *Predestination*, he carries things with so even an hand, or rather so seemingly inclining against the establish'd Religion, making the Articles sometimes speak against themselves, and very often against the receiv'd Doctrines of the Church, and to the Advantage of the Dissenters, and of such Constitutions as are opposite to our own, as one would be apt to take this *Exposition* as a Balance of Protestantism in general. His Lordship manages the several Points in debate with so much Calmness of Temper and Indifference, when in behalf of our Constitution he is to face an Adversary, that no one can charge him with Partiality, so much as to his own Order; he manages the whole in such sort, with respect to the Church, as according to the usual Phrase, may be said to be without Favour or Affection: Witness this short Recapitulation of his way of dealing with several sorts of Adversaries which have happened to come in his way.

What is said of the Text of *St. John* under the first Article, the *Socinian* is certainly very much oblig'd to his Lordship for. By what is said of the Creeds, and especially that of *Athanasius* under the 8th Article, not only the *Socinian*, but the *Deist*, is gratify'd; and so likewise by the Distinction without a Difference of *in the Law* and *by the Law*, under the

the 18th. All sort of loose Sectaries, who have no regard to Divine Commission, but look upon any Lay-man or Mechanick, to be as well qualify'd to baptize or preach, as those that are called Priests or Deacons. These have under the 19th Article sufficient Encouragement to trust to the Word preach'd, and Sacraments administred in their way. The Presbyterians and Independents are under the 23^d Article treated in the most courteous manner that can even by themselves be desired. The Anabaptists have the great thing they contend for suppos'd in the 27th Article: Grant that there is no *express Rule or Precept* in Scripture for Infant-Baptism, and they reckon their Point gained. The 28th Article is brought beneath the *Calvinist*, and the Doctrine of it brought upon the level with the *Zwinglian* and the *Socinian*, by allowing little or nothing of Mystery in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: And whereas there is one sort of Men who were not in being when the Articles were fram'd; and consequently one would scarce expect to have them share in his Lordship's Favour in this Exposition: Yet, what was in the last Article level'd at the old Anabaptists, with respect to Swearing, coming now to be the Case of the Quakers, they are extreamly oblig'd to his Lordship for what he says of the Two Texts in Scripture which they chiefly rest upon. The 39th Article takes notice both of our Saviour's and of St. James's Words, and gives us the true meaning of them, and at the same time asserts the Lawfulness of Swearing when call'd thereto by good Authority. Now, tho' after some pains taken with Men that are not easily perswaded to any thing, they are come at length to some sort of Reason; and the better to avoid some Worldly Inconveniences, do think fit to dispense with bearing testimony by a solemn Declaration in the Presence of God; yet at the same time being willing to fancy with themselves, that they keep to their old Rule of *yea, yea, nay, nay, and swear not at all*. That these People may have their due proportion of my Lord of Sarum's Kindness, in expounding the Article wherein they happen to be concern'd, he repeats the two Texts, *viz.*

The Third Head of Complaint consider'd.

Mat. 5. 34. and Jam. 5. 12. And though his Lordship hath not thought fit to say directly that the Quakers are in the right; yet this he does say for them, that *It must be confess'd that these Words seem to be so expresse and positive, that great regard is to be had to a Scruple that is founded on an Authority that seems to be so full:* But whether this Authority does seem to be so full, may be gather'd from the Texts themselves, as well as from the Article. *St. James*, to be sure, must be suppos'd to mean the same as our Saviour, and to referr to his Command; which when we turn to, we find explain'd by what he subjoins, *viz. Let your Communication be yea, yea, nay, nay;* confining the Rule of *Swear not at all*, either to the doing it by any Creature, or in common Conversation. After all these Instances of my Lord of *Sarum's* Moderation and Temper, if not Favour, shewn to the Adversaries of our Church, though they are but few in comparison of what might be produced; yet, should the Expofitor or any one think fit to reply to these Sheets, it may seem to be but a reasonable Request in the way of Answer, to pick up and put together but the like Number of Passages throughout the whole *Folio Book*, which may be fairly shewn to be meant in favour of the Church of *England*, as by Law establish'd, in direct Opposition to any of her Adversaries whatsoever, except the Papist.

This being said, it is presum'd the Second Head of Complaint against the *Exposition*, will be allow'd to be for the present sufficiently made good. Come we now to the Third, *viz.*

That there are some things in the said Book, which seem to be of dangerous Consequence to the Church of England as by Law established, and to derogate from the Honour of its Reformation.

Here are two things to be consider'd: First, that there are some things in the Book before us which seem to be of dangerous Consequence to the Church of England as by Law establish'd;

The Third Head of Complaint consider'd.

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lish'd; and Secondly, there are things in it, which seem to derogate from the Honour of its Reformation.

As to the First, well is it, if what we find in the Book, shall only seem to be of dangerous consequence to the establish'd Church, and not really prove so in the Event.

Before we come to particular Passages, there are some things may be fit to be consider'd in gross, with respect to the Consequences they draw after them. As first, It can't but be of ill consequence, that any private Person shall at pleasure take the liberty of putting what Sense he pleases upon the publick Acts of the Church; for such the Articles are known to be; and by them we are to be guided in our Judgment of things. By way of Excuse, and the better to justify so new an Undertaking, we are told in the beginning of the Preface, *That it has been often reckon'd among the things that were wanting, that we had not a full and clear Explanation of the 39 Articles, which are the Sum of our Doctrine, and the Confession of our Faith.*

A full and clear Explanation of any thing is, no doubt, what all, except such as think Ignorance an Advantage to Religion, must needs very heartily wish, and desire, and a little repine at the want of, be the thing to be explain'd of what nature soever. But the Question is, which way in the Case before us, such a full and clear Explanation was to be hop'd for, when for any private Person to undertake it and miscarry in it, must needs be of dangerous Consequence to the Church: the Modesty therefore and Caution, to the which the Preface imputes the want of any such Explanation hitherto, seem to have been very commendable Qualities in our Divines; as it might very justly seem to them too assuming for any private Person to venture on such an Undertaking, considering how apt Men are to be mistaken, when by endeavouring to explain a thing and make it clear, they sometimes rather render it more intricate and confused than before. Perhaps for any one to undertake *An Exposition of the 39 Articles*, and publish it as such, was one of the things the least wish'd for of any thing of that kind whatsoever, by all wise Men:

The Third Head of Complaint consider'd.

and could our Great Men have foreseen what proves to be the Effect at last of such an Undertaking, they would not only have wish'd against it, but would have oppos'd it.

It is very well known, that since the Year 1562, when the Articles were settled as we now subscribe them, there have been very many learned Men, who by their Writings upon other Subjects, have shewn they neither wanted Abilities nor Industry, they neither wanted Parts nor good Will to serve the Church in this or any other Way that might be thought expedient; and yet the more Judicious, by their letting this alone, or chusing to do what of this kind they judg'd needful, in another way (as *Hooker*, Bishop *Pearson*, and some other great Men, are known to have done) by their not attempting a direct *Exposition* of the Articles as they lie, or pretending to give their Sense of them under that Name; they have not only given very good Proof of their *Modesty*, but of their Wisdom also, as they foresaw an unanswerable Inconvenience was like to attend such an Undertaking: For, as on the one hand, it is a thing too great for any private Person to pretend to, (and a Bishop is no more in respect of the Church of *England* represented in Convocation;) it is too much for any private Person to offer at, unless the Work, before it be made publick, be submitted to the Examination of a Synod, as we find a whole *Quarto* Book to have been, Page by Page, in Bishop *Overal's* time; so, on the other hand, should such a Work be prepar'd, and brought before a Convocation, there would be as great an Inconvenience in the Publication of it by the Authority of the same Body of Men that first gave the Articles their Being; soasmuch as such an *Exposition* so warranted, would look too like an unreasonable Addition to the Terms of our Communion.

But, be it as it will, whether a ~~liber~~ sett *Exposition* published to the World as such, was either needful or proper, is a thing not easie to determine; but thus much is plain, that since all our great Men for the sevenscore Years last past (and those especially who lived so near the Fountain-head, and were

were Men of excellent Abilities, and fully understood our Constitution) thought it *too assuming for any Man to venture upon such an Undertaking, without a Command from those who had Authority to give it*, till it had been better known where that Authority is lodg'd, that can render an *Exposition* of our Articles Authentick. It had been happy for the Church if my Lord of *Sarum* had thought fit to have been restrain'd by the same means of *Modesty* and *Prudence*, or be it *Caution*, as his Lordship terms it, till it had been regularly determin'd in Convocation, (as thither, no doubt, the Question ought first to have come) whether an *Exposition* of the Articles were needful or not; and if it were, then who were the most proper Persons to be employ'd therein, whether a Stranger, or some of our own Divines.

This being said of the ill Consequences that may attend the Example of what hath not hitherto been thought to be a justifiable Liberty to be taken by wise and modest Men; Come we now in the next place, to consider the Authority that is pretended to by the Author of this *Exposition* whereby to justify the Undertaking. It is suggested that the late Archbishop put him upon this Work, he encouraged the Progress made in it, and approv'd of the whole when finish'd. The Approbation of both our present *Metropolitans*, many of our *Bishops*, and *Learned Divines* is also brought to warrant the Publication of it. This, so far as concerns Matter of Fact, it may be more proper to consider elsewhere: But it is the Consequence of all this, so far as it affects the Establish'd Church, is the thing to be consider'd in this place.

And can any thing look more fatal to the Establish'd Church, than to have a Platform laid for Comprehension, and a Way scor'd out to evade the Force of all Subscriptions, and this to be usher'd into the World with so much seeming Authority? The Name of a Great Prelate is in the Front of it, and the Approbation of several Archbishops, and Bishops, and many Learned Divines, pretended to, and a Shew made, as if publish'd at their Desire. May not this give too great an Alarm to all true Sons of the Church of

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England, and make them imagine that something very extraordinary is at the Bottom of all this? Is there not here a very great Occasion given for such Fears and Jealousies as have of late shewn themselves in warm Disputes between the Two Houses of Convocation? And if such Disputes may be said to be of *dangerous Consequence* (as no doubt they are) it may be very fit to consider how far they are or have been owing to the first Leaf of the Preface of this Book, where so many great Men are made to countenance a Work which the Clergy in general cannot apprehend to be of Service to the Church, but very much the contrary.

It is very unhappy that the Lower House of Convocation should at this time of day be found to complain of the Writings of one of their own Bishops; and yet considering with how much seeming Authority this Book pretends to come forth, this is what could not be avoided, unless we could suppose it were fit that the whole should pass for the future as the Sense of the Church, and the Clergy would be contented to sit down by it upon all Occasions as an *Authenick Exposition*, whenever it shall come to be quoted upon them by the Adversaries of our Church, be it either the Papist or any other Dissenter. The Name of a Bishop alone goes a great way with the English Clergy; and the Authority of *several Archbishops and Bishops* must needs go so much further. And though this part of the Preface, when it comes to be examined, may possibly admit of different *Grammatical Senses*, so as to acquit the many that are said to approve of the Book: Yet, to have so great a Man as the late Bishop of *Worcester* brought upon the Stage to countenance what is generally thought to be very opposite to his last and ripest Notions of things, is very surprizing: And however it may prove upon a full Examination of the matter in point of Fact, it must be acknowledg'd that to be forc'd to question what (if any regard is to be had to Words) does seem to be affirm'd by a Bishop of our Church, is a thing of ill consequence; and nothing can be more unhappy, than that there should be occasion given for such sort of Enquiries.

3. Among the many things to be found in this Book, which may seem to be of *dangerous consequence* to the Establish'd Church, all the wrong Constructions put upon the Articles contrary to the received Doctrines of the Church (which have been already shewn) might very well be reckon'd, and so, no doubt, may the Latitude contended for in subscribing, the Inconvenience whereof hath been already considered under the First Head of Complaint. It is not easie to say what can be of worse consequence to an Establish'd Church than such Projects as undermine Foundations and frustrate the Design of having Articles to be subscrib'd to : which cannot but be suppos'd to have been with a particular Regard had to Men of different Perswasions, and to keep them from being of the Ministry, by whose Preaching the Minds of well-dispos'd Christians may come to be disturb'd, if not deprav'd and drawn into Error.

But this is not all that naturally comes under this Head ; and therefore from these Generals descend we to Particulars.

1. We no sooner look into the Book, but in the very first Leaf of it we meet with that which may prove of ill consequence ; and that is, the giving his Majesty a wrong State of the Case, as to our Differences in Religion in *England*. Such Impressions to be made upon a Prince, who came a Stranger amongst us, and may be suppos'd to have great regard to what is said by so great a Man, may prove very disadvantageous to the Establish'd Church. A great deal of blame may seem to lie at our door, were it really true, that *the Wounds and Breaches* made among those who in common profess the same Faith, are owing to their being unhappily disjointed and divided by some Differences that are of *LESS IMPORTANCE*.

To shew that this is no Slip or Mistake, at the End of the Preface the same thing is in a manner repeated, or suggested, in a Discourse our Author had with a Foreign Divine, a *Lutheran* is brought in objecting against our Church, that

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our Disputes are only about Forms of Government and Worship, and about things that were of their own nature *INDIFFERENT*; things of less moment by far than what the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* differ about, with respect to Predestination. How the *Lutheran* was answer'd, we are not told; but we may easily guess to what effect it was, by the Prayer which follows; which is, that *God would enlighten and direct all Men to consider well how it ought to be answered*: which looks as if he that thus prays, were of the same Opinion with the *Lutheran*. That our Church should be thus mis-understood both at home and abroad, is very unhappy. It is much to be lamented, that so great a Traveller should not first have been better acquainted with the State of the Church to the which he was suppos'd to belong: For who is there almost does not know that the Case is quite otherwise? This is indeed pretended by our Adversaries, but is far from being true. It is well known that the Dissenters from the Church of *England*, who pretending to profess the same *Common Faith* with us, make all our *Wounds and Breaches*, are the *Papists*, the *Socinians*, the *Deists*, the *Quakers*, the *Anabaptists*, the *Presbyterians*, the *Independants*, and some others, (who having not yet arriv'd to the Perfection of a settled Sect, separate from the Church without a Name.) These are the Men that make all our *Wounds and Breaches*: And whether our Divisions (while these are the Men we are daily obliged to encounter) can be said to be of things of *less Importance*, let any one judge.

2. If it be of ill consequence to a Church to have its Clergy mis-represented both to the King and to the World, there does not want for a further Instance of this kind: In the very beginning of the Book; the first Paragraph of the Epistle, and again, the very first thing we meet with in the Preface, gives a very odd Account of our *Divines*. What is said of them, can by no means redound to their Credit, in point of dealing sincerely either with God or Man.

Man. In the Epistle they are suppos'd to have pray'd for two Kings successively as *Defenders of the Faith*, whom at the same time they apprehended to be led into the Design of overturning it. This, it is said, we were asham'd to do; but yet this it seems we did: But whether this be a just Imputation upon such as were Preachers in those Days, or not, depends upon these two Points: 1. Whether by the Title of *Defender of the Faith*, we must necessarily mean Defender of the Protestant Religion, or only the Christian Faith in general; since that Title was inherent to the Imperial Crown of this Realm long before the Reformation. 2. Whether, if we enjoy the Profession of our Religion, and have the Protection of the Law, under the Administration of a Prince that happens to be of a different Perswasion, this may not be sufficient to justify the terming such a Prince *Defender of the Faith*. Some Salvo of this kind had been more to the Advantage of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, than to make them take Shame upon themselves for prevaricating with Almighty God.

In the very Beginning of the Preface, our English Divines are again brought to acknowledge a like Piece of Insincerity: It is told in such a manner, as if they really neither thought any hurt in it, nor would pretend to disguise it. The Words are these: *It hath been likewise often suggested, that these Articles seemed to be so plain a Transcript of St. Austin's Doctrine in those much disputed Points concerning the Decrees of God, and the Efficacy of Grace, that they were not expounded by our Divines, for that very reason; since the far greater Number of them is believed to be now of a different Opinion.* What is here said to be suggested, the Expositor doth himself elsewhere again suggest, p. 168. which, if true, the very Example might indeed very much countenance the Practice of subscribing one thing, and meaning another, so as to recommend the Latitude scor'd out in the *Exposition*; but, at the same time it cannot but reflect upon the Church, were it true that the Clergy allow'd themselves a Liberty of subscribing in

such a manner as must of course render all Subscriptions of no effect.

3. A very ill use might be made to the Prejudice of the Church, of a very groundless Suggestion to be met with, both at the End of the *Introduction*, and at the Beginning of the *Exposition* of the 20th Article; in both which places the Reader is led to imagine, that the printed Articles to the which we subscribe, do vary in very many particulars from the Originals, some of which Variations are very considerable: And to make this the more observable, our Articles are collated in p. 10. 11, 12, &c. with the *Synodalia* laid up in *Corpus Christi* College Library in *Cambridge*. Now, though in some respects those Manuscripts may be call'd Originals, or Authentick Draughts; yet are they not by any means to be look'd upon as the last Originals, from the which our Articles were printed. The last Record was doubtless either burnt in the Fire of *London*, *An.* 1666. or hath otherwise hapned to be lost.

True it is, that as much as this comes to, seems to be intimated at the End of the *Introduction*, so as in effect to make the pompous collating of Copies to be altogether insignificant, and of no use: But if we turn to the 20th Article, where the Church is said to have **Power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and Authority in matters of Faith.** We are there told what revives the Difficulty, and leaves it unanswer'd: For the Expositor is pleas'd to say p. 192. *The first Words of this Article were put in this Place according to the printed Editions, though they are not in the Original of the Articles signed by both Houses of Convocation, that are yet extant.* Who would not hence infer that these Words were not in the Original sign'd in Convocation, whenas his Lordship can only mean the Manuscript in *Corpus Christi* College: For that they were in that Original from whence our Articles were printed (and which was signed in Convocation, as well as that imperfect Draught still remaining) was put beyond all Dispute or Question by Archbishop *Laud*, in a Speech in the Star-Chamber, and by

by Dr. *Heylin* in his Hist. of Presbyt. p. 268. as there may be occasion hereafter to shew more at large.

The Truth of this Fact, so great an Historian as is my Lord of *Sarum*, cannot be suppos'd to have been ignorant of, which makes it the more unaccountable, why such a Saying should be plac'd in the Front of the Exposition of that very Article, and be left unexplain'd, whereby the Reader may happen to be but too easily mis-led, and imagine the old Cavils rais'd against the Clause to have been just : by his calling those Manuscripts *Originals*, too much Credit may come to be given to a thing, which after a great deal of noise made of it in the World, hath so publickly and so many Ways been refuted : And to this we may add one further Inconvenience which may happen to attend the keeping up so groundless a Scruple, (and the more Variations are pointed out, the greater still shall be the Objection) the Clergy in general, upon the Supposition of those Manuscripts being true and Authentick Originals, may seem to labour under some Difficulty with respect to the Obligation they lie under to read the Articles pass'd in Convocation *Anno 1562*, in the Face of their Congregations within such a time after their Admission to any Spiritual Preferment ; and this they do from the Printed Editions : which if not truly taken, but on the contrary, innumerable Variations are to be met with, and some of those of Length and of Moment ; such an Objection (were the Fact true upon which it is grounded) might create a great deal of Trouble : But of this enough.

The several foregoing Instances of the *Exposition* being in many respects of *dangerous Consequence* to the Church, might suffice to make good that part of this Third Head of Complaint which is now before us : But there is still something behind of greater consequence than all that has been said as yet, and which will therefore deserve to be fully consider'd ; as what, if not set in its true Light, may one time or other prove very fatal to the Church.

The Third Head of Complaint consider'd.

Such is the Nature of our Constitution both in Church and State, that things being settled upon a good Foundation, and many wholesome Laws being provided to our hands, for the good Government both of the one and of the other; (And it being natural for all wise Men to desire a Continuance of that which they have long enjoy'd the Benefit of.) Our Happiness in some degree may be said to consist in the Security we have of never undergoing any considerable Alteration, but by our own Consent; no considerable Alteration can be made in the State, but with the Consent of our temporal Representatives. No regular Change of *Church Government* or of any thing that is of moment in Divine Worship, or the Establish'd Religion, but with the Approbation and Concurrence of our Spiritual Representatives assembled in Convocation. So secure is the Church of its continuing in a quiet Possession of all its just Rights according to its present Establishment: It being only in case of great Necessity, that the Secular Power does ever go about to over-rule that Authority that is lodged in the Church, so as to include all Spiritual Persons in their Sanctions, without their more immediate and explicit Consent. This in things purely Spiritual, hath rarely been exercis'd, and never but upon extraordinary Occasions, and where the Welfare of the State hath been judg'd through present Emergencies to be concern'd.

The King, as the Head of the Legislative Power, is by the Law declared to be (as even without such Declaration he undoubtedly would be, and is) *Supream*, as well in Church as State: And the Church of *England* has been always so very careful to acknowledge it in its full Extent and Latitude, as never to have given the least Occasion of Jealousie; but hath rather run into it chearfully, as its great Happiness and Security to have it maintain'd; and yet we may remember the time when we lay under a Necessity of making a stand in behalf of our Constitution, denying the Supremacy in the King to reach to a Power of suspending Laws, or of making Alterations, contrary to Law by *Regal*

Authority alone; because this comes too near to the making new Laws by the same Power.

Upon the whole matter, such is the nature of our Constitution, and the wise Contrivance of it, both with respect to Church and State, and with a due regard had to the Monarchy at the same time, that it cannot easily happen that any of the three should suffer by the one breaking in upon the other, unless it be brought to pass by some fatal intestine Divisions and Feuds: And such was the Case when all the three did suffer an Eclipse for a time, it was owing to no less a Cause than an absolute unhinging of the Government, and a sort of Dissolution of the whole.

When thus the Happiness of our Constitution consists in a due Poize and good Correspondence between the Monarchy, and its Spiritual and Temporal Subjects, what could be thought of more effectually to lead to a general Misunderstanding, than to go about to cast the whole into a new Mould, and put things upon a new Bottom? To throw down our Boundaries, and let in all sorts of Adversaries into our very Bowels by a new Scheme of Latitude in subscribing to the Articles, is bad enough: But to carry it so far, as to make all sorts of Changes practicable, without going the round-about way of Convocational Decisions, or Acts of Parliament, is certainly much worse: A Way to be scor'd out to baffle all Security from the present Establishment; such a Notion to be started, and often suggested by a Bishop (which was with great reason universally exploded, when the Consequences of it began to appear in the late Reign) is very surprizing; and yet this is what we do often meet with up and down, and seems to be taken for granted upon all Occasions in the *Exposition*, viz. That a Prince finding, or at least apprehending his Clergy to be corrupted, or to be so stubborn and refractory, as not easily to be brought to such Measures of Reformation as he thinks needful for the good of the Church, may call some few Divines to his Assistance, whom he takes to be the most knowing and fittest Counsellours; and with their Advice
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he may bring things to what Shape he pleases, by his *Regal Authority*. If this be not of dangerous Consequence to an Establish'd Church, and a free People, where all things are settled and bounded by Laws, it is not easie to say what is. An absolute Sovereignty in Spirituals is that which exceeds all Pretences even of the Pope himself: And what the late King *James*, to the Loss of his Dominions, was flattered into the Exercise of, is nothing in respect of what the Expositor (unless he shall think fit to explain himself, which is much desired) seems at present to promote. And though the Notion, if carry'd to the Height, be of as pernicious Consequence as can well be imagin'd, yet the Expositor seems so very fond of it, as to be found to scatter the Suggestion up and down his Writings in some other Books, as well as in this last, which he is willing we should believe to have been written with Care. His History of the Reformation gives us every now and then a Taste of it, taking much less notice of the Concurrence of the Clergy in Synod, or of the Part they bore in that great Revolution, than he might have done. There is no Constitution stands better affected to the Supremacy than the Church of *England*: But to carry it beyond what ever any Protestant Prince since the Reformation has ever desired it should be carried, or is, in truth, consistent with the known Laws of the Land, is not to complement, but to dis-serve the Crown; and therefore it is hoped his Lordship does not mean so much as his Words, upon reading, do seem to import.

Our Expositor's great Unhappiness in this particular, (not to make it more than an unhappy Mistake) is want of sufficiently distinguishing between the *Regal* and the Legislative Power in *England*; but that, through this Mistake, he seemsto labour an unlimited Power of making Alterations in the Church at Will to be in the Prince, appears not only from what we shall find insinuated in the *INTRODUCTION*, as to what he is willing should be thought to have been in Fact, upon the first settling

ling the Reformed Religion in *England*, but also from several other Parts of the Book. As for Instance, p. 259. there is this Passage which will need to be explain'd and soften'd, if otherwise meant. *When the Body of the Clergy comes to be so corrupted, that nothing can be trusted to the regular Decisions of any Synod or Meeting called according to their Constitution; then, if the PRINCE shall select a peculiar Number, and commit to their Care the examining and reforming both of Doctrine and Worship, and shall give the legal Sanction to what they shall offer to him, we must confess that such a Method as this runs contrary to the establish'd Rules.*— But still here is an Authority both in *FACT* and *RIGHT*; for if the Magistrate hath a power to make Laws in Sacred Matters, he may order those to be prepared by whom, and as he pleases.

When by Magistrate, is meant the whole Legislative Power, the Question is different, and consequently the Expression at best, in a thing of the highest Importance, is left ambiguous; in the one Sense it is not true, and in the other it stands in need of some *Proviso's*, with respect to the Law of God, and the particular Constitutions of States and Kingdoms.

But the Apology made for the Irregularity, as being contrary to the *Establish'd Rules*, seems to take off all Ambiguity, not leaving room for so favourable an Interpretation, as by *Prince* to mean only as in Conjunction with the Three Estates of the Realm. The Power attributed to the *Prince*, is suppos'd to be against the *Establish'd Rule*, which, were all the Three Estates suppos'd to concur, cannot be said to be the Case. This therefore seems to restrain the Sense, and makes what is said to be only meant of the *Prince* himself. Now, whatever may be the Case of an Absolute Sovereign, this is certainly what does not suit with the Constitution of *England*: And, as we shall find that it was not so in *Fact* at the Reformation, so neither hath it ever been allow'd, that there is a sufficient Authority any more in *Right* than in *Fact*; and to have suggested such a thing in the late Reign, might have seem'd to justify

he what even in some few Steps taken towards it, was zealously oppos'd.

True it is that this Authority of *Fact* and *Right*, is upon the Supposition that the Clergy are so corrupted, as that nothing can be trusted to a regular Decision. But is not the *Prince* left to judge when this is the Case, and when it is not? And may not a Refusal to suspend when commanded, be reckon'd a Degree of this Corruption, as was the Case in the late Reign? Or may not the Clergy be look'd upon to be headstrong and intemperate when they are only doing their Duty, and what becomes them in behalf of the Church, and thereby be adjudg'd not fit to be trusted with a regular debating of any thing in order to their coming to Synodical Decisions.

This absolute Power in the *Prince* in Matters Ecclesiastical, is more than suggested in the Exposition of the 37th Article, viz. *Of the Civil Magistrate*. Many Instances are brought from Scripture of the Kings of *Israel*, importing a Power in the way of Precedent or Pattern to us, which neither they, nor our Princes can ever be shewn to have exercis'd or claim'd. *Vid. p. 383.* and then in the next Page no notice being taken of the many regular Synods, whose Advice and Concurrence was requir'd in the first framing the Canons and Edicts, to be found in *Theodosius's* and *Justinian's Code*, and the *Capitulars* of *Charles the Great* (all which may, notwithstanding be made to run in the Names of the several Emperors, and be term'd their Acts, as all Acts of Convocation in *England* are rightly termed *the King's Ecclesiastical Laws*) the Expositor, without any regard had to the manifest Difference between their Constitution of Absolute Monarchy, and ours, which is otherwise; the Words given us, and which we are to make the best of we can, are these. *When the Church came to fall under many lesser Sovereignities, those Princes continued to make Laws — and to do every thing that appeared necessary to them for the good Government of the Church in their Dominions.*

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But, with his Lordship's good leave, some of those *Princes* (and those of this Kingdom in particular) have for many Ages acted both in Spirituals and Temporals, according to such Laws, only as have first been consented to by the Representatives of all Parties concern'd. This is slid over, and not taken notice of, and the Notion of the Supremacy carried on at the same rate as in the Case of the *Roman Emperors*, and even beyond what they really did take upon them to do.

Least this new Scheme laid for a new capacious Church, and a way scor'd out for the erecting it, should alarm the Clergy too much, and the Methods to be pursu'd in order to it, should not so very readily be digested. The better to assert a *Right*, the same is suggested in the *Introduction* as to *Fact*; and our Reformation is made to be owing to the same irregular way of proceeding, and the Exercise of this extraordinary Power. What Methods may have been pursued in other parts of the World, the better to throw off the Usurpations of the Pope and Popish Superstition, is not of present concern to enquire; that this might be the Case elsewhere, is very possible: But to fix it upon *England*, is very much to *derogate from the Honour of our Reformation*: Which is the other part of this Head of Complaint, and the last thing to be made out.

One that has given the World so large an Account of those times, as to have publish'd two *Folia's* under the Title of the *History of the Reformation*, should, one would think, be so well acquainted with all material Circumstances of that whole Affair, as not to over-look the most considerable part of it; and which most of any thing, redounds to the Honour of our Church; and that is the having had all things transacted in a more regular way than perhaps in any other reform'd Church whatsoever. Things, generally speaking, were carry'd on according to the ancient Rules of Synodical Debates and Decisions. A providential Juncture of Affairs made many things practicable here, which other Countries could not be so happy as to come up to. This is what we have reason to value our

selves upon, and bless God for, and not go about in Complement to others, (the better to bring our selves upon the level with them) to pass over in Silence, or disguise.

So considerable a Part as the Convocation bore in all the most material Steps that were made towards the Reformation, as well in framing the Articles and Canons, as the Liturgy, was what one would have expected to be taken notice of at every turn in such a History, and not find it oftentimes crowded into so little Room as we do, and so slightly mention'd, as if it were scarce worth the observing. One would really take that part which ought to have been most dwelt upon (and stood most in need of an Historion's Pains to set it in the best Light he could) to be but as a thing by the bye, a mere Circumstance that hapned to attend that mighty and happy Revolution in the Church. It is very often so mention'd, as one would not take it as any thing of an efficient Cause, or as what did in any measure help on the Work, or contribute towards the perfecting of it.

Far be it from any one to go about to detract from a Work, for the which the Author hath so deservedly had the publick Thanks of both Houses of Parliament; but as he never thought it worth his while to have the like Thanks in Convocation (though many have sate since the Publication of that Book;) so it must be confess'd he has throughout shewn but too little regard to that part of our English Constitution. So far as the Reformation was carry'd on by Convocational Decisions previous to publick Sanctions, there seems to be a sort of design'd Concealment, and a more than accidental Silence.

It is well known, that Convocations were not only in those days, as well as now, conven'd by the common Course of the Law; but also as constantly met and sat, as did the Parliament: And as in Convocation, things of the Church are most properly *cognisable*, so it is not to be imagin'd, that so many Learned Men sat idle, when there was so great an Occasion of Application and Diligence; and yet our
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great Historian sometimes makes a Line or two serve for a whole Session, at that very critical Juncture when the greatest things of all were transacted. A remarkable Instance we have of this, p. 195. * Vol. 2. A. 1552. after a large Account given of the Proceedings in Parliament, at which time the Reformation receiv'd many finishing Strokes. It is said, on the 15th of April the Parliament was dissolv'd, &c. Then follows this short Account, *The Convocation at this time agreed to the Articles of Religion that were prepar'd the last Year.* This is so slender an Account of that matter, looking as if it were dropt into the History by chance, that one would be apt either to overlook it as an insignificant Parenthesis, or run it over as an accidental thing, as little worth the Reader's notice, as seemingly disregarded by the Author, so far as may be gather'd from his way of expressing it.

* Burnet's History of the Reformation.

Whether more might not have been said of that Years Convocation, we shall see by and by. In the mean time, that the Reformation was not carry'd on in the way it is in the *Introduction* made to be, may be learn'd from Dr. Burnet himself, without going any further; and his Authority in this case ought not to be question'd, whilst he will so effectually be found to confute what is suggested by the Expositor; the Historian will soon satisfy the Expositor that the Church did not lie under that fatal Necessity which he seems to suppose it did. There was no want of a regular Decision of Matters in Synod; nor were things alter'd by *Regal Sanction* only, as we are made to believe in the *Introduction*, according to what the Papists sometimes will pretend to object to us, as if our Religion were at first meerly Secular and Parliamentary: That which is said upon this Occasion seems very full and express, as we find p. 56. of the *Introduction*; where mention being made of the Articles, and of the manner of their being fram'd, we have these Words:

This may serve in general to justify the Largeness and the Particularities of this Confession of our Faith.—Some Steps made-- in a large Book—under the Title of the Ne-

The Third Head of Complaint consider'd.

cessary Erudition.—Many of the Errors of Popery were laid open and condemned in it, but none were obliged to assent to it, or to subscribe it. After that, the Worship was reformed, as being that which press'd most, and in that a Foundation was laid for the ARTICLES, which came quickly after it. How, or by whom they were prepared, we do not certainly know.—Questions were fram'd relating to them. These were given about to many Bishops and Divines, who gave in their several Answers.—All Sides had a free and fair Hearing before Conclusions were made. In the Fermentation that was working over the whole Nation at that time, it was not possible that a thing of that nature could have passed by the Methods that are more necessary in regular times, and therefore they could not be offered at first to Synods or Convocations. The Corruptions complained of were so beneficial to the whole Body of the Clergy, that it is justly to be wonder'd that so great a Number was prevail'd with to concur in reforming them; but without a Miracle, they could not have been AGREED TO BY A MAJOR PART. They were prepared, as is most probable by Cranmer and Ridley, and published by the REGAL AUTHORITY. Not as if our Kings had pretended to an Authority to judge in Points of Faith, or to decide Controversies; but as every private Man must chuse for himself, and believe according to the Convictions of his Reason and Conscience; so every Prince (or Legislative Power) must give the publick Sanction according to his own Perswasion.—Thus the Part that our Princes had in the Reformation, was only this; That they being satisfy'd with the Grounds on which it went, received it themselves, and enacted it for their People.—It was also remarkable, that the Law which stood first in Justinian's CODE, was an Edict of Theodosius's, who finding the Roman Empire under great Distractions by the DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS in matter of Religion, did appoint that Doctrine to be held, which was received by Damasus Bishop of Rome, and Peter Bishop of Alexandria. Such an Edict as that being put in so conspicuous a Part of the Law, was a full and

and soon observed Precedent for our Princes to act according to it.

Here are two things seem very obvious: The one, that the English Clergy were so govern'd by their Interest, that a *Major Part* of their Representatives in Convocation could never have been brought to consent to the Articles, which were prepar'd in order to a Legal Establishment of the intended Reformation, which began in *Henry VIIIth's* Reign, and was brought to great Maturity the very first Year of *K. Edw. VI.* The Second Thing is, that for want of that which could not be expected *without a Miracle*, the Articles were publish'd by *Regal Authority*, without any Synodical Decision. An Apology is made for this way of proceeding, as if things had not been done in a regular way: But there was a Necessity for it. *Roman Emperors*, who had the entire Legislative Power, are brought as a Precedent for making Edicts to prevent the Distractions arising from *Diversity of Opinions* in Religion (which is the very thing *Our Articles were framed to avoid*;) and according to this, our *Princes* are suppos'd to have acted upon the like Occasion: And who would not after this imagine that our Articles were required to be subscrib'd by *Regal Authority* only whether the Clergy lik'd it or not; and the Articles themselves fram'd by the same *Regal Authority*, and the Clergy in Convocation had nothing to do either in the composing them, or in agreeing to them. This seems to be the Expositor's Notion of this matter: Come we now to the Historian, and learn from him true Matter of Fact.

The great Step made towards the Reformation in the Reign of *K. Henry VIII.* consisted in the acknowledgment of the King's Supremacy: And what Foundation that leading Doctrine had from the Acts of Convocation, and how far it was establish'd by the famous Act of Submission, is too well known to need any Proof, or to be dwelt upon. Whatever other Progress was made in that Reign, favour'd more of Inclination and Desire of Reformation in the generality of the

the People, than of any actual compleat Change. Nor can it be said that any thing considerable was done, or so as to be look'd upon to be fixt and establish'd till the Parliament sat in K. *Edw. VIth's* Reign, which was within less than a Twelvemonth after he came to the Crown. In which Parliament many things were enacted for the better Establishment of the Reformed Religion; but whether things were done without a Convocation, or whether the Clergy of *England* were a Body of Men so self-interested, as not to be brought to depart from the Corruptions of *Rome* by reason of the Benefit they reaped from them, may in some measure be gathered from the following Passages in Dr. *Burnet's History*, Vol. 2. p. 40.

This Act was occasioned by a Speech that Archbishop Cranmer had in Convocation; in which he exhorted the Clergy to give themselves much to the Study of the Scripture, and to consider seriously what things were in the Church that needed Reformation; that so they might throw out all the Popish Trash that was not yet cast out. Upon this, some intimated to him, that as long as the six Articles stood in force, it was not safe for them to deliver their Opinions. This shews a good Inclination rather than Aversion to what was propos'd, and their pointing out a Step so very needful to be first made, only argues that they acted with Caution, and as becomes such a Body of Men. This was reported to the Council; upon which they order'd an Act of Repeal.

Pag. 41. A Bill is said to be brought into Parliament concerning the Sacrament, and so were several other Bills conducing to the Reformation; but since a Convocation was sitting with an Archbishop at the Head of them, so well inclined, (unless the Lower House were such People as the Expositor represents them, which we shall know more of presently.) It is not at all likely, that the House of Commons would desire to have the first debating of such Points, as is that of the Sacrament, and of Communion in both kinds, without hearing what the Clergy had to say upon such Subjects. Dr. Burnet tells us, p. 47. They were not idle in the Con-

vocation, though the Popish Party was so prevalent in both Houses, that Cranmer had no hopes of doing any thing, till they were freed of the Trouble which some of the great Bishops gave them. There were, it seems, some in the Lower House so far influenced by some great ones of the Upper House, as to obstruct Business, and make things go on but heavily: But if the Convocation did not proceed so vigorously as might be wish'd, it looks as if the Fault lay more in the Upper House of Convocation than in the Lower.

We are told, the most important things they did, was the carrying up four Petitions to the Bishops: 1. *That there might be Persons empowered to reform the Ecclesiastical Laws.* 2. *That according to the Ancient Custom of the Nation and the Tenor of the Bishop's Writ to the Parliament, the Inferiour Clergy might be admitted again to sit in the House of Commons; or that no Act concerning Matters of Religion might pass without the Sight and Assent of the Clergy.* 3. *That since divers Prelates and other Divines had been in the late King's time appointed to alter the Service of the Church, and had made some Progress in it, that this might be brought to its full Perfection.* 4. *Among other things, a Desire to know whether they might safely speak their Minds about Religion without the Danger of any Law.* The Nature of these Petitions is such as does not at all look like favouring of Popery, or as if the Inferiour Clergy were so inseparably link'd to their old Religion by their Interest, as the Introduction makes them to have been. But to proceed, though these Petitions are said to be the most considerable things they did, yet there still follows something more, which may be worth our observing; because it comes home to the Point in hand, p. 50. *On the 29th of November a Declaration was sent down from the Bishops concerning the Sacraments being to be received in both kinds, to which Jo. Tyler the Prolocutor, and several others, set their Hands; and being again brought before them, it was agreed to by all without a contradictory Vote, 64 being present.* And that this was antecedent to the Act of Parliament concerning it, appears from

from p. 41. where we find the Bill concerning it was not sent down to the Commons till Dec. 10. *On the 17th of Dec. the Proposition concerning the Marriage of the Clergy was sent to them and subscribed by 35 affirmatively, and by 14 negatively ; so it was order'd that a Bill should be drawn concerning it.* Which Bill, pag. 47. was brought into the House of Commons Dec. 19. and sent up to the Lords on the 21st ; but did not pass that House that Session, nor till the Year following, viz. in a Parliament which met on Nov. 24. 1548. In which Parliament we also find an Act made to confirm and establish a new Form of Divine Service, provided by the Archbishop and Bishops in pursuance of an Act of the foregoing Convocation. Nor is it to be question'd but that the Convocation had their Hands in the Progress that was made in the Reformation, as well in this second Parliament as in the first, and so in others ; though the Historian either for want of Authentick Remains, or for such Reasons as are best known to himself, takes no notice at all of a Convocation, either this Parliament or the next, though such undoubtedly there was.

As to what Alterations were made in the Intervals of Parliaments, they were not only in great measure transacted by the Archbishop, with the ready Compliance of the Parochial and inferiour Clergy ; but in most Particulars they may also be observ'd to have been little more than the Consequence of things begun in Convocation, or in the way of temporary Provision, and preparatory to a further Establishment : and when in the Year 1551. p. 166. the Articles began to be thought of, which required some time to be well digested and argued by Divines ; it is said, *Upon these Considerations that Work was delayed till this Year, in which they set about it, and finished it before the Convocation met in the next February : Not so finished, as to be the Acts of the Church, but brought to such Perfection as to be laid before the Convocation, as we find they were the Year following ; the very Title whereof is more expresse than the Historian (so very short he is in relating it as hath been already observ'd). In the Title to the Articles, we have this Account,*
that

that they are agreed upon by the Bishops and other Learned and Godly Men in the Convocation at London, Anno 1552. to root out the Discord of Opinions, and establish the Agreement of true Religion. Published by the Kings Majesty's Authority, 1553.

* Vid. Sparrow's Collection, p. 39.

But as for any Publication of them by the Regal Authority, before they were thus regularly agreed upon, or any just Occasion given to apologize for the King's taking upon him to do any such thing, we have not the least Footsteps of it, neither in Dr. Burnet's History, or in any other that is extant that we know of: And why the Expositor should quote the Edicts of Emperours in the way of Precedent on this occasion, is not easie to conceive: And whether wilfully or not, surmiz'd to the Disadvantage of our Reformation, it is that which an unwary Reader may make very wrong Inferences from. This whole matter we may find set in a much more advantagious Light by Dr. Heylin from Archdeacon Philpot's Mouth in Queen Mary's Reign, for the which he quotes *Acts and Mon.* fol. 1282. in his History of the Reformation, under the Year 1552. The Account given of the Catechism, upon its being objected that it was not pass'd in Convocation, doth fully answer for the Articles also, and for many other things of the like nature, which was to this effect: That the Convocation had empower'd several Bishops and others, to act in their stead, and to draw up their Sense; which being a Work of some time might be done in the Interval of Parliaments and Convocations, and the Compilers being such as they had an entire confidence in, and the Archbishop at the Head of them; and the same being ratify'd upon the next Opportunity by a tacit Acquiescence, if not otherwise, and more explicitly by formal Vote, it ought not at this time of day to be objected against such Compositions, as if they wanted the regular Decisions of a Synod or Convocation. And had our Expositor said any thing of this sort (though he had borrowed it from Dr. Heylin, to whom it had been no Disparagement to be obliged for a great deal more than this comes to;) or had he turned to the Place from whence this Speech of Philpot's is taken, and may be seen at large, any Account

The Third Head of Complaint consider'd.

of this nature had certainly been better than to suggest the contrary, by apologizing for the Irregularity of things being done by the *Regal Authority* only. By something of this kind he might have done both the Church and himself more right than he hath, and had not been near so obnoxious as he hath been shewn to be to that part of the Complaint of *derogating from the Honour of the Reformation*.

Other Passages there are of the same nature and tendency; as particularly one that hath been already touch'd upon under the 23^d Article. The better to cool the *Hotter Spirits*, who will be *Magisterially* dictating for Episcopacy, in opposition to other Constitutions. We are there told, that those that fram'd the Articles, left things *open and at large*, considering that all things *among themselves had not gone according to those Rules that ought to be sacred in regular times*, closing with a common Saying that will serve all Constitutions alike, but does not use to be pleaded where there is no Occasion for it: *Necessity hath no Law, and is a Law to its self*. What the meaning of this is, or wherein there was any Occasion for this last Refuge, is not any where said; surely it cannot mean the Fable of the Nag's Head, or any of those thread-bare Objections concerning a regular Consecration and Succession of Bishops, which was no sooner urged, but was as fully answered in the late Reign: But some great Defect or other we are given to imagine there was in our Reformation, though not generally known. Something, no doubt, the Expositor had in his Eye, or else there could have been no Occasion for so unusual a Plea as is that of *Necessity*. What *Necessity* this Church lay under, not to be regular in its way of reforming is not easie to say.

It is certain this, that no Church in the World hath greater reason to be thankful to Almighty God for those happy Opportunities given us, to have all things done according to Canon and Primitive Practice, to the degree of putting to silence even Calumny, it self, and so as to enable us to deal with the known Enemies
of

of our Reformation the Papists, at their own Weapons, and appeal to Antiquity, and Councils, and Fathers, more safely and justly than they themselves can do. And as all the Reformed abroad, who are in any measure entituled to the Name of a Church have readily allowed the Church of *England* the right-hand of Fellowship, as being the main Bulwark of Protestantism, as in opposition to Popery; so may it be observed, that she hath been more invidiously strook at by those that act for *Rome*, than all others of the Reformed put together.

This being said, as well to lay open the more remarkable Passages in the Exposition which seem to be of dangerous consequence to the Establish'd Church, as to rescue our Reformation from any unwary Suggestions or Insinuations to be met with to its Dishonour. What remains, is only in all dutiful manner to re-mind the Learned Author of the *Exposition*, that he hath in the Preface promis'd, *pag. 6.* not to take it ill, or reckon it as an Injury, to be shewn wherein he may in what he hath written happen to mis-lead; to have any Mistakes discover'd to him, that he may consider them carefully, is what he seems to desire: And therefore it is to be hop'd he will not be offended at what is here done, or may further be found needful to be done of the like kind. To wait the seeing a better Work of the same kind from some body else (as in a sort of Challenge seems to be called for, if this be found fault with) is a little too much, especially considering that to pretend to expound the Articles of our Church, is what hitherto hath not been thought to be a proper Undertaking for any private Divine: But what is desired, is, with all Calmness and Candour to allow for the Necessity the Clergy in Convocation apprehended themselves to lie under upon so extraordinary an Occasion, and to consider withal that it is more-easie for any single Person, even though it be the Bishop of *Sarum* himself, to be mistaken, than for such a Body of Men, to judge so ill of a Book, as to complain of it publickly without good Cause. This being well con-

sider'd, my Lord of *Sarum* need not despair seeing a better Work of the same kind, and yet be his own : It being no hard matter for so able a Pen to make such Alterations and Amendments in another Edition, as not only to make the Book to be of very good use to young Students in Divinity, but also to deserve and have the Thanks of the Church, and those as publick as the present Complaint against it hath been.

But should his Lordship not like his being thus taken at his Word, and look upon it as too great a piece of Condescension (notwithstanding his Promise) to recal any thing he hath said ; yet if he will but be pleas'd so to explain himself, as that the Adversaries of our Church may not be able to quote a great Bishop of our own against us upon all Occasions, at the same time allowing, that whatever is new to us English Divines and peculiarly owing to his Lordship's own Thoughts and Notions of things, ought not to be look'd upon to have been publish'd with that Authority and Approbation of Archbishops and Bishops, as in the Preface seems to be suggested , but is in truth his Lordship's single peculiar Exposition, and no ones else. If his Lordship shall think fit to gratifie thus far those that declare themselves offended at the Book, and have appear'd with some Concern against it, a very little Pains this way might contribute very much to the removal of such Scruples as the Exposition in its present Dress hath rais'd in them, and may possibly prevent any further particular Examination of it, though it is generally believ'd that such both is intended and prepared.

A N
EXAMINATION
 O F
 Some Passages in the
P R E F A C E
 T O T H E

Exposition of the Thirty Nine ARTICLES.

NOT to trouble the Reader with every particular Passage to be met with in the *PREFACE*, which may seem justly liable to Exception, all that is propos'd to be consider'd under this Head, is so much of it only as shall be found either to reflect upon our Divines in general, or does affect the Reputation and Credit of our Archbishops and Bishops in particular, or by a Misrepresentation of things, may tend to the Prejudice of the Establish'd Church, and prove of ill consequence, should Men take for granted what is but too plainly suggested to its Disadvantage.

There are three Remarkable Passages, all which have been already taken notice of in the foregoing Sheets, but come now in the nature of an Appendix, to be resumed, because, rather than to break the Thread of the Discourse by long Digressions, a particular Discussion of them was then declin'd, and reserv'd for a further Opportunity.

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They are all of them Facts fit to be consider'd, and which, when accounted for, may possibly make a further Examination of the Preface the less needful, when some other Parts of the Books may come to be look'd into.

The First thing the Clergy have reason to complain of, is the Expositor's serving his own purpose of a propos'd Latitude in subscribing the Articles at the Expence of other Peoples Credit; and our Divines are brought in by way of Precedent, for a Practice which does by no means favour of Christian Simplicity and upright Dealing. The *Preface* begins with an Offer at some Reasons why there hath not hitherto been any *Exposition of the Articles* of any Note bestowed upon the World. The first Reason given, is so good a one, as it might have serv'd very well without looking out for any other, and that is *Modesty and Caution*; our Divines not having thought it either proper or decent to attempt it: But my Lord of *Sarum* did not think fit to rest here, but goes on to a Second Reason, which is as bad as the other is good; and whether it be true in Fact, or not, is the thing to be consider'd in this place. The Words are few, and therefore the more easily transcrib'd.

It has been likewise often suggested that those Articles seemed to be so plain a Transcript of St. Austin's Doctrine in those much disputed Points, concerning the Decrees of God, and the Efficacy of Grace, that they were not expounded by our Divines for that very reason, since the far greater Number of them is believed to be now of a different Opinion. What is here said to be often suggested, is no where contradicted by the Expositor; but on the contrary, is very often taken for granted in the Body of the Book: Nor is it to be doubted, but that it is placed thus advantageously in the very Front, to give the better Grace to the Latitude proposed throughout the *Exposition*. This being a very home Instance, if true, of some Men subscribing in a Grammatical Sense different from that which they apprehend to have been intended by the Church. The Truth therefore of this Fact is, what

what it may be needful to inquire into, and be satisfied in, as it is plain that very much depends thereon.

And here it must be acknowledged at the very first View, that the Reason our *Divines* are thus made to give for their not Expounding the Articles, is a very weak one, and by no means satisfactory: For shall their happening to differ a little from our first Compilers of the Articles in some few Points (were the Case to be taken as it is stated) excuse their Silence as to all the rest, which are at least ten Parts of twelve? Could not they have pass'd over two or three Articles after the same manner as my Lord of *Sarum* hath thought fit to do, and let no one be the wiser for what is said of those intricate Points, and employ their Pens upon such Doctrines as are more useful and of greater Concern? Where was the necessity of having the whole Body of Articles unexpounded, because two or three of them seem to them to have been penn'd or transcrib'd from *St. Austin*, whom they do not in those Points exactly concur with in Opinion?

But then, Secondly, how does it appear that our *Divines* have acted upon this Principle, or have ever been of this Opinion? This is what ought to be very clearly made out; or else it is laying a thing to the charge of our *Divines* which is not at all for their Credit, and which they will have no reason to thank my Lord of *Sarum* for charging them with. How does it appear, that any of our *Divines* that either understood themselves or the Articles as they should do, did ever suppose these Articles, (where God's Decrees and the Efficacy of Grace may seem to be concerned) were a Transcript of any other Doctrine than that of the Scriptures in general, or of *St. Paul* in particular, who is very express upon these Points.

True it is, that some have been apt to imagine that the Compilers of our Articles were a little *Calvinistically* given; and that, though they have worded things cautiously, yet one may discern something in the 17th Article that looks in favour of the Doctrine of *Predestination* in opposition

sition to the Universalists (as the Generality of our English Divines are now suppos'd to be;) but this Surmise is nothing but a vulgar Error grounded upon want of History and Chronology, not considering the time when those Articles which some would draw these Inferences from, were penn'd. There is no body doubts but that some considerable Divines that had been driven abroad by means of Queen *Mary's* Persecution, did return with a Taint of the Principles of those Countries where they had been: And therefore had the Articles really been fram'd in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign (according to the Date of them as we now subscribe them,) something might be said for this Suggestion; not but that, considering that whatever they prepar'd, was to be agreed upon in a Convocation of good English Divines (the Majority whereof in all likelihood, were for downright English Divinity :) it would even then have been needful for the Predestinarians to have been upon their Guard, and not to have been too open and expresse in their introducing their private Opinions, or in imposing them on the Church.

But that which sets aside all Surmises of this kind, as to what the Compilers of the Articles were in their own private Judgments, it is plain, that whatever Alterations happen'd to be made in the Articles, *Anno 1562.* those that may seem to touch upon *God's Decrees* and *the Efficacy of Grace*, are either the same that were agreed upon in King *Edward's* Reign, *Anno 1552.* or what is alter'd in them, is rather to fence against the Predestinarian Doctrine (according to the modern Acceptation of the Word) than any way design'd in favour of it: Witness the additional Clause in the 17th Article, the better to provide against the Presumption of such as might build too much upon their being predestinated or called. Furthermore, we must receive God's Promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture, and in our Doings that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God.

This is such a confining all that had been said of *Everlasting Purposes, Decrees, and Councils*, to the known and common Methods of Salvation scor'd out to us in Scripture by the Merits of Christ, and to a sincere Repentance and Amendment of Life, as wholly lays aside all those vain Hopes of being sure of Salvation, if we can but work our selves up to the Opinion of our being of the Number of the *Elect*, and that such as are the *chosen* ones can never miscarry.

Not to descend to the Niceties of the Schools, or the peculiar Doctrine of St. *Austin* upon this point of *Predestination*; as it hath been already in great measure shewn (and may perhaps hereafter be more fully made out) that the Articles of our Church were not intended to reach those needless Speculations which my Lord of *Sarum* hath taken so much pains about under the 17th Article, so may it very truly be said, that there is not the least colour of Reason to imagine that they were penn'd in any other sense than such as subscribe may very heartily and readily come up to: And consequently it is to do our *Divines* a great deal of Wrong to suggest the contrary, or to insinuate, that though they apprehend them to have been meant one way, yet they scruple not to subscribe them in another: They subscribe the Words, but do not come up to what they apprehend the Church intended should be believ'd and taught.

This hath been often suggested by some People who first fancy to themselves that the Articles are on their side, and then perswade themselves that every body must needs understand them their way, though at the same time they happen to be of another Opinion. But this ought not to be surmised by any one that pretends to write with an Expectation of being believed, unless he could be able to perswade some *Divines* of Note to own this to be true of them, which it is believed my Lord of *Sarum* would find it very difficult to do.

My Lord of *Sarum* himself in his *Introduction* informs us, that the Articles were first prepar'd by *Cranmer* and *Ridley* before the Year 1552. and his History tells us they were pass'd in Convocation that Year; all which was before our Divines could be suppos'd to be infected with Calvinistical Principles, or the uncouth Notions of the Schools abroad. The Terms which were commonly made use of, are retain'd as being Scriptural, but the Doctrine is sound and Orthodox, and not justly liable to any Cavil or Dispute; and therefore not likely to have been declined being expounded by our Divines, because not altogether agreeing with their Sentiments of things.

2. The Second thing to be consider'd in the *Preface*, is a large Account given of the mighty Encouragements the Author of the *Exposition* had from our *Archbishops* and *Bishops* to undertake and publish this Work. We are told, *he was first mov'd to undertake this Work* by that Great Prelate *that then sat at the Helm*, meaning Archbishop *Tillotson*: But, had not my Lord of *Sarum* first sufficiently intimated to his Friends how well he was prepared for the Work, and furnished with Materials of Thirry Years standing, it may not be unreasonable to doubt whether that Primate (who was suppos'd to know Men very well) would have pick'd out his Lordship as the most proper Person to be thought of in the Church for such an Undertaking.

A great deal is said of that Great Man's applauding the Performance when finish'd; but yet it so happens, that something is said of that Primate, which does not very well agree with this Account; and that is, that the Papers lying before him, and telling a certain great Man what they were, he did express a Distrust of the Success they were like to meet with in the World, should they be published without a great deal first done to them: And it is observable that they came not forth till after his Death. It is very well known, that our late Primate was a Person of great Candour, from whom no Expression could fall that was harsh even to the

the greatest Stranger, and much less to a Friend; and therefore what in him might be only matter of Civility, my Lord of *Sarum* might interpret to the best advantage, and take to be so high a Commendation, as in point of Decency, he thinks *ought to be suppress'd*.

We are further told, *that the late most Learned Bishop of Worcester read it very carefully; he mark'd every thing that needed a Review, and his Censure was in all points submitted to.* He express'd himself so well pleas'd with it, that my Lord of *Sarum* does not think it becomes him to repeat what he said of it.

To pretend to contradict my Lord of *Sarum* in this or in any other Relation of Matter of Fact, would by no means be consistent with good Manners, whatever some out of a due regard to the Memory of that great Man, have been apt to surmise. But thus much any one may be allowed to suggest, that though so much as that Great Man did read, as it is now published, it is possible he might approve of: yet, that there are now some things in it which he could not approve of, may be gather'd from a Passage under the very first Article, *p. 40.* unless we can suppose him to have approved what he both writ and spoke against with a great deal of Warmth and Concern to the very last. The famous Text of *St. John, 1 Epist. 5. 7. viz. There are three that bear record in Heaven, &c.* is in the Exposition so very coarsely handled, that no one that knew Bishop *Stillingfleet*, can suppose he could have endur'd it, after having writ very largely in behalf of that Text in a Book against the *Socinians*, printed *Anno 1697. p. 164.* He there answers all the Objections against it, and vindicates it to the height: And such was his Zeal in asserting the Authenticalness of it to the last, that those who were ordained by him a little before his Death, will attest, that in his examining them, he took occasion to speak of it, and declared it very unfit for any one that gives his Assent and Content to the Liturgy (where the Text is twice us'd) to pretend to question its being Scripture. From this one Instance it is easie to conclude, that civil Expressions of Thanks or good liking,

are not to be taken too strictly, or to be look'd upon as a sufficient Warrant for all that is said in so large a Book.

As this may suffice to account for the two great Prelates that are dead; come we now to those that are alive. *Both the Most Reverend Archbishops, with several of the Bishops, and a great many Learned Divines, have also read it. — They looked upon this Work as a thing of that importance, that I have reason to believe they read it over severely. —* Yet, after all these Approbations, and many repeated Desires to me to publish it, &c. This, according to the usual Acceptation of Words, may seem to import, that both our present Metropolitans, and many of the Bishops, read the whole in Manuscript, approv'd of it, and desired the Publication of it: But it must be confess'd that the Words may bear some other *Grammatical Senses*, and may not be meant to express so much as this comes to. One that hath read some part of a Book, may in a figurative way of Expression, be said to have read the whole. Nay, for any one to have had it a while in his custody to read, may seem to be sufficient to warrant an Author to suppose it to have been read, (as who could forbear immediately perusing so excellent and elaborate a Piece coming from so great a Man) and yet, upon a diligent Enquiry, it may have so hapned, that some that are said to have read it, might read but very little of it; and many of the Bishops, who for their Learning, and some other Reasons, were the most likely Persons to have been consulted upon this Occasion, might not so much as read a Line of it till after it was published; and no one of the Order may at present be very ambitious of the Honour of vouching for the Book.

Upon the whole matter, so far as the Credit of our Archbishops and Bishops may seem to be concern'd in this matter, it may truly be said in vindication of them, that even supposing what is said of them to be meant as the Words do seem to import, though the Exposition may be said to have been read and corrected by them, yet this is neither affirm'd, nor probably so much as intended to be
af-

affirmed of the Epistle, or Preface, or the *Introduction*; these (which are all of them filled with exceptionable Passages) the Author might look upon but as outward Embellishments, and not reckon them as a part of the *Exposition*. And it is certain this, that in them, more than any where else, the Scheme that is drawn for Latitude discovers it self; and without them, (by way of Key and Inlet into the grand Design) the whole is so artificially put together, that unless it be here and there that we meet with some very glaring Expressions, and bold Strokes, a great deal might pass off well enough, and a hasty Reader not discern from a few odd Notions scatter'd up and down, the Use intended to be made of the whole.

2. It is not so much as pretended that the Author had the leave of any of those that perused any part of the Book, to bring their Names upon the Stage to warrant the Publication of what comes forth in such a Dress, as scarce to be known by them to be the same, now that they come to see it again: Nor will many, if any of them think it reasonable to be made to answer for or make good every civil Compliment or Expression cursorily coming from them to one of their own Order, upon a seeming Design of doing wonderful Service to the Church, and whom they might be unwilling, considering all things, to suspect to mean otherwise; or that the Product of so many Years Labour should not deserve their Thanks.

My Lord of *Sarum* may be pleas'd to remember a Story which is not foreign from the Business in hand, wherein he was more than a little concern'd.

About Twenty Years ago Dr. *Burnet* published a very excellent Book, take it all together, called *The History of the Reformation*: It had in effect the publick Thanks of the Kingdom, imply'd in the Votes of both Houses of Parliament, obtain'd by the Author in its favour, which may seem to include the Approbation of Archbishops and Bishops: And who would expect after this, that any Fault worth taking notice of should be found in such a Book? And yet, when

when this History came forth, a very great Prelate of our Church, very eminent for Learning, and on many accounts very highly esteemed and reverenc'd, took Offence at a Passage in this History, and sent for the Author, and reprov'd him sharply, for having done great wrong to the Memory of Archbishop *Cranmer*, one of our first Reformers, one of the Compilers of our *Book of Common Prayer*, and one whom we suppose had a good share in drawing up the Articles of Religion. The Bishop did not tax the Historian with any false Record, or saying any thing that was not really true in it self, but for not having taken due care to set things in such light, as to prevent a Mistake which the World had been apt to run into; which was, that *Cranmer* was an Erastian, whenas by his subscribing to Bishop *Leighton's* Answer to the King's Questions, it appears, that whatever he might sign as President of the College of Bishops, and by that means might be obliged to subscribe in returning the Opinion and Determination of the Majority, yet he was himself in his own private Judgment Orthodox, and accordingly subscribed to the Opinion of one that had clearly express'd himself on the right side. Now, to bring this to the Point in hand, what Dr. *Burnet* then said for himself, was this, that he had shewn his Book to a very good Judge, viz. the then Bishop of *St. Asaph*; he had approv'd of it, and highly encouraged the Publication of it. When the Bishop of *St. Asaph*, the now Lord Bishop of *Worcester*, came to be spoken with upon this matter, his Answer was home and satisfactory; that he had indeed read the Book in Manuscript, and liked it very well, as any one would do that reads it; but it is not to be expected, that in reading over two such Volumes, he should examine every Quotation, and look into every Record, and compare Hands, and act the Critick from Page to Page. A great deal must be supposed to depend upon the Fidelity of the Historian, and his Reputation must answer for Mistakes of that kind, and no body else. Thus the Bishop of *St. Asaph* fairly acquitted himself; but the Historian heard of this thing over and over in

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Print, and he did what he could to excuse it; but not being willing to acknowledge himself in the wrong, he never could in the Opinion of the World get clear of the Charge.

What those that are said to have read, and to have approv'd of this Exposition of the Articles, may have to say of the like kind, perhaps it would not be to the Advantage of the Expositor to enquire: But this one Instance may suffice, to shew that the Author of a Book, notwithstanding any the most Authentick *Imprimatur*, must after all, expect to answer for himself, and not think that the Civilities of his Friends will screen him from the Imputation of Error and Mistake. In the *Exposition* before us, no one will deny but that a great deal of Learning is shewn, and Materials there are sufficient for an excellent Work: But when we come to search to the Bottom of the Design, and see to what it tends, it is a very great Question whether either of our Archbishops, or any of our Bishops or Learned Divines, will care to engage themselves in behalf of the Book, or undertake to patronize what so plainly discovers a Partiality for Foreign Constitutions, by making our Articles bend to them, and reconciling them to other Peoples Notions of things very different from the Doctrine of the Establish'd Church.

This being said in vindication of our Archbishops and Bishops, the better to remove the great Difficulty the Clergy in Convocation labour'd under, with respect to the seeming Authority, wherewith this Exposition would be thought to come forth. Come we now to the third thing to be consider'd, as a thing of great Concern to the Establish'd Church, as it is what gives a very wrong State of our Case with respect to our unhappy Divisions in *England* in point of Religion, there being nothing more common than to see Altar against Altar, and Men professing the same Faith, avoiding the Communion of each other, refusing to say their Prayers together, or to serve God with one Mind, and with one Mouth, as all good Christians ought to be willing to do. Where the Fault lies hath been for many Years, and still
cont.

continues to be the main Question between the Dissenters and the Established Church; and to throw the Blame on the latter, is the great Endeavour of our Adversaries, and which to admit, is certainly the greatest Piece of Disaffection to the Church that can well be expressed; and yet this is what at the latter end of the Preface the Expositor seems to incline to much more than is consistent with the Reputation of the Church, it being a thing not to be denied, but that, were it true that our Differences with Dissenters were only of things *indifferent* in themselves, and all our Breaches might be made up by making some few Concessions, great Regard ought to be had to the Weakness of a Brother, and little things ought not to keep us asunder: But, if this be not the Case, then to represent it in such manner as if it were so, is to do the Church a great deal of wrong.

This being said, come we now to see what the Preface suggests touching this matter; and then we will enquire into the Truth of the thing, and see whether the Expositor hath done the Church Justice or not, as Opportunity hath offer'd it self. The Words we are to consider, are these.

I shall conclude this Preface with a Reply, that a very eminent Divine among the Lutherans in Germany made when I was pressing this matter of Union with the Calvinists upon him. — He said, he wonder'd to see a Divine of the Church of England press that so much on him, when we, notwithstanding the Dangers we were in (it was in the Year 1686.) could not agree our Differences: They differed about important Matters concerning the Attributes of God and his Providence; concerning the Guilt of Sin, whether it was to be charged on God or on the Sinner; and whether Men ought to make good use of their Faculties, or if they ought, to trust entirely to an irresistible Grace; these were Matters of great moment. But he said, we in England differed only about FORMS OF GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP, and about things that were of their own nature INDIFFERENT, and yet we had been quarrelling about these for above an hundred Tears, and we were not yet grown wiser by all the mischief that this had done us. — He concluded

cluded, Let the Church of England heal her own Breaches, and then all the rest of the Reformed Churches will with great Respect admit of her Mediation to heal theirs. I will not presume to tell how I answer'd this: But I pray God to enlighten and direct all Men, that they may consider well how it ought to be answered. The Objection was natural enough for a Lutheran to make, who by living a great way off, might well be a Stranger to our Affairs, and to the nature of our Differences. He might probably have been told by such as corresponded with our Dissenters, that our Church is very strict and rigorous, bearing hard upon the weak Brotherhood, breaking with them upon such Trifles as the Sign of the Cross, or the Colour of a Habit, one desiring to have it black, and the other will have it white, and the like. But surely no Divine of the Church of England could be at a loss for an Answer to such a frivolous Objection, grounded on a Mistake so very gross, and so easily refuted.

That which makes it the more suspicious that Dr. Burnet (for in 1686. he was no more) did not take care to do our Church Right, by answering the Lutheran as he might have done, is his declining to tell what his Answer was, at the same time concluding with a Prayer which argues a Distrust of the Cause, and implies that so good an Answer could not be made as he could wish.

But whatever Dr. Burnet or the Bishop of Sarum's Notions may have formerly been, or are of this matter, it may be fit to enquire whether what the Lutheran suggests, be really true in Fact or not; for if it be otherwise, then it must be acknowledged that nothing can be more injurious to the Established Church, than to have such wrong Notions of its Temper instilled into People, be it either amongst our selves or abroad.

If our Divisions are about things of less Importance, as is suggested in the Epistle, if they are about things that are of their own nature indifferent (as in the Words before us) it must be confessed, that they that divide from the Established Church, are so much the more to blame: But yet it is but natural to conclude, that the Clergy of the Established

Church at the same time must needs be a proud stiff sort of People, quarrellsome in their Nature, and too ready to take advantage of having the Law on their Side, if by receding from some few indifferent things, all might be well; and a Union of all sorts of Protestants throughout the Kingdom were so easily to be had: Whether therefore this comes any thing near to a true State of things in *England*, is the thing to be considered.

That our Dissenters have very little to object against our Doctrine or way of Worship; that they are fain on the one hand to find fault with things of *less Importance*, and things which are *in their own nature indifferent*, for want of being able to object any thing of moment, may be true enough. But, on the other hand, it is by no means true, that our Divisions in *England* are owing to any of those *indifferent* things. The Things we break upon, are of the *Highest Importance*, as will plainly appear, when we consider who are the Men that make the most considerable Parties of Dissenters from our Church, who they are that make the *Wounds and Breaches* amongst us. They are (as hath been already observ'd) the Papists, the Socinians, the Deists, the Quakers, the Anabaptists, the Presbyterians, the Independents, besides many other Hereticks and Schismatics. As to the Papists, no one will deny but that our Differences with them are of things of the highest *Importance*, though they profess the same Faith. But is it not a thing of as great *Importance* to deny the Divinity of Christ, and run into the embracing several Heresies condemn'd by the Catholick Church, as the Socinians and Deists are known to do; who, for *denying the Lord that bought 'em*, and renouncing the Satisfaction wrought for them by his Sufferings, are condemn'd by *S. Peter*, and are by the Spirit of God said to bring upon themselves swift Destruction? Is it a thing *indifferent* in it self, and of *less Importance* to lay aside both Sacraments, as the Quakers are known to do, and bring all Religion to Enthusiasm, and an unintelligible Jargon of a Light within, the better to put out the Light of the Gospel, and make the Scriptures as a dead Letter, to signifie little; and all this the better

ter to disguise a Disbelief of several of the Articles of the Creed?

Is it a thing so very easie to be complied with, to admit that we are none of us Christians, because we were baptiz'd in our Infancy? And yet this is the Doctrine of the Anabaptist which we cannot come up to; besides many other extravagant Opinions, as to a Power of Preaching, without any Pretence to Orders of any kind; as also with respect to Civil Government, which any one of common Sense must allow, and the *Lutheran* Divine himself would soon have allowed to be far from being of *their own nature indifferent*. Then, Lastly, as to such as it is probable the Bishop had his Eye upon most, when he seems to think the Objection is of so great weight as to behove us to consider it well: Is it a thing of small Importance, a thing *indifferent* to an Established Church, to have it disputed whether the Members of it are a Church or not? whether the Church, as a Mother, hath a right to any degree of Honour and Respect from her Children? Can it be reckon'd as a thing indifferent to an Episcopal Church to have it questioned whether Episcopacy be a lawful Institution or not? or whether we ought for Peace sake to throw up the Commission we can so plainly prove to descend down to us from the Apostles themselves, (and consequently from Christ) and for the future derive all Spiritual Power, either from the Choice of the People, and a Call from a Congregation in the Independent way; or change Episcopacy, though as ancient as Christianity, for Presbytery, which was never pretended to as an Establishment, till *Calvin*, and that only at first upon the Account of absolute Necessity? And yet, unless we will come up to this, all other Overtures for Peace, we are abundantly satisfied will signifie nothing. These are the principal Wounds and Breaches in the Church of *England*: These are the Points that keep us from being all of one Mind: It is by these Differences we are *unhappily disjointed and divided*: But whether these are of things of *less Importance*; whether the *Lutheran* had been rightly informed, is not hard to judge; or whether we differ only about *Forms of Govern-*

ment and Worship, and about things that are of their own nature indifferent. The contrary is so very plain and undeniable, that it looks very odd that the Bishop should say, *he will not presume to tell us how he answer'd the Lutheran*, whenas there is no true Son of the Church of *England* that has ever turned his Thoughts to these Matters, but even before ever he had the Benefit of the Bishop of *Sarum's* Prayer for his further Enlightening, knew very well how to give a very full Answer to so common, and withal so weak an Objection.

And since his Lordship is pleas'd so often to touch upon this String, and insinuate his Wishes of Compliances on the Churches side, for the healing of Differences, and the uniting of Protestants, as our Dissenters expect to be call'd, to shew how impracticable a thing it is in Nature to have the so much wish'd for *Comprehension* begin with Concessions to be made by the Church, even before they are ask'd; let us but fairly state the matter how things must be ordered to bring it to pass.

1. Whereas we have Dissenters of several sorts, and they could never yet agree, (nor is it likely they ever should agree) upon what Terms or Alterations to be made in our Forms of Government and Worship they would all come in. To endeavour to please one and displease another, is only a sure way of bringing all things into Confusion, and can never consist with the Apostle's Rule of having *all things done decently and in order.*

2. Before we can come to the Union desir'd, we must disclaim the very Essentials of a Church which consist in a Power from Christ and his Apostles to preach the Gospel, and administer the Sacraments, and give Rules and Directions for the carrying on the Service of God, and leave every one to pray as he pleases, and worship as he pleases, and hear whom he pleases, and believe what he pleases, and thus break all the Bonds of Unity and Communion, with a Prospect of uniting with we know not who.

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This is in effect to un-church our selves with the Hopes of having a few more than now we have to join with us in the Offices of Religion, which is the best Term it will bear, for Communion it cannot be call'd.

3. To be able to join with our Protestant Dissenters (taking only five or six of the chief Sects amongst them) before we can do it, we must lay aside several of our Articles (which if done in due time, might have saved the Bishop of Sarum a great deal of trouble in expounding them) we must cancel our Canons, renounce our Orders, or declare them needless, if not superstitious and Popish; We must throw away our Common-Prayer Book, quite alter the Constitution of the Government so far as concerns the Lords Spiritual: We must perfectly new-mold both Church and State: We must, to please the Anabaptists, be all baptiz'd again; and to please the Quakers, renounce Water-Baptism and the Use of all outward Sacraments: We must deny the Divinity of Christ, and never give Glory to any but the Father, if we hope for Peace with the Socinian. These and many other, are the Terms we must come up to if we have any Thoughts of a general Union, and would not have it any longer said that we differ with them in *things of less importance*, as is suggested in the Epistle, or *about things indifferent*, as in the Preface before us.

But now, on the other hand, since it is impossible for the Church to come up to such Terms as will please all Dissenters, thereby to put an end to our Differences, till they are all agreed among themselves (which it is morally impossible to suppose they ever should be,) It is evident that the blame of Separation wholly lies at the Door of the Dissenters: It is to them, and not to the Church, we owe our Divisions. There is not any thing of moment they can object to us: But if there be such a thing as Heresie or Schism; if there be such a thing as a Church or Church-Government; if there be an Obligation to Decency and Order in Religion; if all are not upon the level; but there is in Scripture such a thing as being *subject one to another*, and something

of Government there must be both in Church and State, then that which the Church of *England* hath to say for her not being able to comply with her several Adversaries, is this, that it is impossible to please them all, especially considering, that what they insist upon and oppose, are things so very material, as to be of the very Essence of a Church; and at the same time, what we have to object against them is, that for the most part they separate from us, upon pretence of a few Ceremonies only which they themselves cannot but acknowledge to be of *their own nature indifferent*; they may come in to us by the Help of a very small degree of Christian Submission and Compliance; but for the Church to pretend to go in to all that dissent from her, cannot end in any thing less than an intire ceasing to be a Church.

This being the true State of the Case between the Church of *England* and our Dissenters, with respect to the Differences in Religion between them and us, it plainly follows, that tho' a Toleration be very practicable, and is no more than what is now granted by Law, yet a Comprehension is impracticable; and though the *Exposition* seems altogether to look that way, and one would be apt to guess it to have been penn'd for that purpose; yet, should it meet with any Countenance from Authority, it must necessarily, and of course end in the utter Destruction of the Established Church, and in as much Confusion as would be the having no Face of Government in the State.

To be without some sort of Government, and a competent degree of Subjection and Conformity in all Inferiours towards their Superiours, be it in the Church or in the State, according to what the Laws of each do require, cannot but be highly destructive, and in its Consequences very fatal as well to the one as to the other.

And now it is not hard to judge whether such a Close of a Preface could be meant in favour of the Establish'd Church. For an Author to raise an Objection (be it from himself or from another) and then not only decline the giving it a proper Answer, but by concluding with a Prayer to God

for a particular Assistance upon so extraordinary an Occasion, as if an extraordinary Illumination were needful in this case, and that the usual ordinary Means were not sufficient to remove so great a Difficulty; Thus to make a Shew of the Objection being next to unanswerable, is to leave the Reader much more at a loss than he finds him, laying a Necessity upon him to recurr to his own first Notions of things, and the strength of his own Reasoning, to extricate himself from the Difficulties, which, by what he hath been reading, he finds himself under: And, should the rest of the Work be of a piece with this Beginning, a Man will be apt to give over very often with no small Disgust before he comes to the End of the Book, very justly complaining of being disappointed, and rather put back than advanc'd, when thus he must be forc'd to help himself at every turn some other way, instead of being better inform'd by what is call'd an *Exposition*.

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